

Silicon Times Report

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R.F. Mariano, Editor
STR Publishing, Inc.
Voice: 1-904-292-9222 10am-5pm EST
FAX: 904-268-2237 24hrs
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- CPU Industry Report	- AOL & CSi Real Deal	- UltraEdit Update
- Frankie's Corner	- Intel: Faster Pentium	- Yahoo signs CD Deal
- Obsidian Review	- HP: 2 New InkJets	- IBM nixes NET PCs
- Painter 5 Review	- People Talking	- Classics & Gaming

McAfee Sues Symantec for \$1 Billion
Windows 98 Overview
Tokyo ISP Sues U.S. 'Spamster'

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The Publisher, Staff & Editors

Celebrating Our Tenth Year!

1987-1997

Florida Lotto - LottoMan v1.35

Results: 09/06/97: five of six numbers with 1 four, 6 three # matches

>From the Editor's Desk...

We missed last week's issue due to a number of unavoidable incidents. Dana was in the midst of moving, Frank is building an addition onto his home, and last but certainly not the least. STReport's ISP/ Gateway merged with a much larger, more efficient system. The merger, hardware wise, had been planned to be as smooth as silk but as fate would have it. Ma Bell made short work of the plan. The phone numbers were not forwarded properly, the digital hook-ups were incorrect and finally, the resulting log-jam was absolutely horrendous. We found over one hundred sixty two items in our mailbox the following Monday morning. The NEW ISP, Leading Network Solutions, is quite the powerhouse. There is every indication they will be far more reliable and speedy than many of us saw in previous months before the merger. We are now in the midst of ironing out the last few wrinkles involving our Newsgroup Server. The FTP server is fine and the mailboxes are fine now. The Website itself, <http://www.streport.com>, is superfast now.

Of Special Note:

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STReport is now ready to offer much more in the way of serving the Networks, Online Services and Internet's vast, fast growing site list and userbase. We now have our very own WEB/FTP Site, do stop by and have a look see. Since We've received numerous requests to receive STReport from a wide variety of Internet addressees, we were compelled to put together an Internet distribution/mailing list for those who wished to receive STReport on a regular basis, the file is ZIPPED, then UUENCODED. Unfortunately, we've also received a number of opinions that the UUENCODING was a real pain to deal with. You'll be pleased to know you are able to download STReport directly from our very own FTP SERVER or WEB Site. While there, be sure to join our STR AutoMailer list which allows a choice of either ASCII or Acrobat PDF.

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LATE BREAKING INDUSTRY-WIDE NEWS

Weekly Happenings in the Computer World

Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

CompuServe Sale Accords Reached

H&R Block announced this morning it is selling its CompuServe subsidiary to

WorldCom Inc., operator of Internet service provider UUNet Technologies Inc., in a deal valued at \$1.2 billion. Separately, WorldCom announced it will give America Online all of CompuServe's content and subscribers and \$175 million in exchange for AOL's ANS network service, which supplies about one-third of the network capacity for AOL's subscribers. Also AOL has signed a five-year contract under which WorldCom will become its largest network service provider.

The CompuServe Network Services division, which operates some 100,000 dial-up ports in 105 countries, is being retained by WorldCom. The CompuServe-WorldCom agreement -- which has been unanimously approved by boards of directors of the three firms -- calls for CompuServe shareholders, including H&R Block, to receive a fixed exchange ratio of .40625 shares of WorldCom stock for each share of CompuServe, subject to certain adjustments.

Meanwhile, The Washington Post this morning quotes sources close to the negotiations as saying CompuServe still will exist as a separate service but be fully operated by AOL. As one unidentified source told the paper, "AOL is going to use its scale and its resources to make (CompuServe) more focused and efficient in servicing the business and professional market." The Associated Press notes the deals still require approval by government antitrust regulators. If approved, AOL's biggest competitor would be Microsoft Corp.'s Microsoft Network.

CompuServe has been on the market for about a year by H&R Block, which owns 80 percent of the stock. A plan to make CompuServe a separate stock company owned by H&R Block shareholders, a realignment planned for late last year, was withdrawn after Internet stocks in general declined. Also, The Wall Street Journal reported this summer that German media giant Bertelsmann AG, which owns 5 percent of AOL, was contributing cash so AOL could sweeten an offer pending at that time of roughly \$1 billion for CompuServe. The Post story this morning says Bertelsmann and AOL would jointly operate CompuServe's European service.

AOL Promises Distinct CompuServe

America Online officials say they are committed to preserving CompuServe as a distinct service following yesterday's complex merger agreement that gives the Dulles, Virginia-based AOL control of CompuServe's content and subscriber base. "We'll continue to manage CompuServe as a separate brand ... forever," AOL Chairman Steve Case told The Wall Street Journal yesterday. "We want to preserve the existing CompuServe experience."

Robert W. Pittman, chief executive of AOL Networks, added, "Are we going to AOL-ize it? No." As reported, H&R Block is selling its 80 percent interest in CompuServe to WorldCom Inc., which in turn plans to sell CompuServe's consumer business to AOL. Writing in the Journal this morning, reporter Thomas E. Weber comments, "AOL and CompuServe have cultivated very different images. AOL has wooed consumers getting online for the first time with its colorful graphics, celebrity interviews and freewheeling chat rooms. CompuServe, launched in 1969, has traditionally catered to serious hobbyists and professional users, serving up stock prices, airline schedules and computer-troubleshooting forums. Think of CompuServe playing Brooks Brothers to AOL's Gap. So CompuServe's members can be forgiven for fretting about the future."

Case maintains AOL will operate CompuServe separately, telling Bob Woods of the Newsbytes computer news service that efforts also will continue to develop a new interface for CompuServe's online service. Case added some

CompuServe content that is appropriate for AOL's users might find its way over to CompuServe's new big brother. Also, Newsbytes says Pittman, former MTV executive before joining AOL, has been named to oversee the CompuServe operations after it comes under AOL's corporate umbrella. As noted, the merger still must face government regulators and officials have different views on when the deal should close. Case said six months, while WorldCom Vice Chairman John Sidgmore said by the end of the year.

Case also said he did not think antitrust concerns will come into play in the approval of the merger, mainly because of the commitment to keep the services separate. Meanwhile, the Journal's Weber this morning cites these other concerns raised by CompuServe members and AOL responses:

- '• Will CompuServe email addresses change? AOL says no, because CompuServe will remain a separate service.
- '• Will the price of CompuServe's service go up? AOL says it has no plans for a price change.
- '• With AOL trumpeting how the WorldCom deal will alleviate busy signals for AOL members, should CompuServe subscribers expect a tougher time getting online? No, AOL says the company will use additional capacity from WorldCom, but won't divert any capacity from CompuServe.

"We intend to marshal the resources of AOL behind CompuServe to take it to the next level," Pittman told the Journal. Among other possibilities, he said AOL could offer CompuServe members its popular Buddy Lists technology, a feature that lets users know when their friends log on.

Survey Questions Net Privacy

A new survey finds nearly half of 70 Internet sites run by federal agencies collect data about visitors, but most disclose nothing about how the information will be used. This revelation, from a survey by OMB Watch, a nonpartisan research group, comes even as the Clinton administration is pressuring commercial ventures with Internet sites to respect the privacy of Web surfers. Reporter Aaron Pressman of the Reuter News Service notes privacy concerns arise on the Internet "because whenever a person using Web browsing software visits a site, the site can collect information about the person, sometimes without their knowledge," adding, "Some sites also ask users to register or fill out questionnaires."

OMB Watch also found few government sites provide adequate statements about the Privacy Act of 1974, which regulates government use of personal information. Ari Schwartz, the primary author of the report, said, "The new medium has blurred the lines created by the Privacy Act and subsequent laws," adding the group is calling on the administration to develop a government-wide policy for protecting privacy on the Internet.

Pressman notes a similar survey of mostly private Web sites released in June by the Electronic Privacy Information Center found that none of the 100 most popular sites met basic standards for privacy protection. Schwartz said a uniform government policy could help quell concerns that have prevented the government from using the Internet to provide more information to citizens, adding, "Guidance clarifying the application of these laws to the Internet would ease the tensions of both agencies who are reluctant to supply new information over the Web and users who are concerned about their privacy."

Judge Attacks Encryption Rules

A federal judge in San Francisco has ruled that U.S. government regulations

on the export of encryption software are unconstitutional. U.S. District Judge Marilyn Hall Patel says licensing requirements for the export of encryption software and related devices are an unconstitutional prior restraint on First Amendment free speech rights. She also has issued a permanent injunction barring the government from enforcing the regulations against plaintiff Daniel Bernstein, an assistant mathematics professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, or against anyone who sought to use, discuss or publish his encryption program.

"By the very terms of the encryption regulations," Patel wrote in a 32-page ruling, "the most common expressive activities of scholars -- teaching a class, publishing their ideas, speaking at conferences, or writing to colleagues over the Internet -- are subject to a prior restraint by the export controls." Having found the regulations to be invalid, she added, she could have issued a nationwide injunction barring their enforcement. But she said she had kept the injunction as narrow as possible pending appeal because "the legal questions at issue are novel, complex and of public importance."

The Reuter News Service comments, "The ruling is important because the computer industry sees use of encryption technology across country borders as essential for advancing electronic commerce and private communications over the Internet. The government has previously cited national security concerns over the export of encryption programs." The case centers on Bernstein, who as a graduate student developed an encryption algorithm he called "Snuffle." In 1992, Bernstein asked the State Department whether Snuffle was controlled by export regulations then in force which classified cryptographic software as "defense articles." The government told him his program was subject to licensing by the Department of State prior to export.

Bernstein sued the State Department in 1995, challenging the regulations on free speech grounds, alleging he was not free to teach, publish or discuss with other scientists his theories on cryptography embodied in the Snuffle program. As reported, Judge Patel ruled last December that the old regulations limiting the export of encryption software violated the First Amendment. However, late last year, President Clinton issued an executive order transferring jurisdiction over the export of nonmilitary encryption products to the Commerce Department.

This latest ruling from Patel is on Bernstein's amended lawsuit which included the new regulations and new defendants. The judge said her finding that encryption source code was speech protected by the First Amendment did not remove encryption technology from all government regulation.

Stronger Encryption Rules Backed

Several U.S. senators now say they would favor imposing mandatory domestic regulations on computer encoding technology. This would broaden the encryption debate, which to-date has focused largely on export limits. California Democrat Dianne Feinstein is quoted by the Reuter News Service as saying she would favor requiring manufacturers of encryption products to include features allowing the government to decode any message by recovering the software keys.

Speaking yesterday at a hearing of the Senate Judiciary Committee's technology, terrorism and government information subcommittee, she said, "Nothing other than some kind of mandatory key recovery really does the job. The public safety issue is a paramount one." Senator Jon Kyl

(R-Arizona), chairman of the terrorism subcommittee, added he was "in complete agreement."

Meanwhile, FBI Director Louis Freeh told the subcommittee he also would favor mandatory key recovery, but said such a policy was probably unattainable given the strong opposition from other lawmakers and interest groups. Said Freeh, "Mandatory key recovery, to the extent that it was implemented, would be the best law enforcement solution," adding that as a lesser step, he suggested legislation requiring manufacturers to include key recovery features without immediately requiring users to turn on the features.

Freeh said network service providers, like online services, also might be required to build key recovery features into their systems. Reuters reporter Aaron Pressman writes no opponents of the current export limits testified at the hearing, but "afterwards, some said they were shocked by the discussion." Alan Davidson, staff counsel at the Center for Democracy and Technology, told the wire service, "It was really shocking to hear how casually Senators and the FBI director talked about imposing domestic controls. They've crossed a new line in this debate."

Pressman notes, "Software companies oppose mandatory key recovery schemes, arguing they are unworkable, expensive and not required by customers. Civil libertarians also oppose such plans, fearing the government could trample the privacy of individuals." David Banisar, staff counsel at the Electronic Privacy Information Center, said mandatory key recovery would violate at least three parts of the constitution's Bill of Rights, adding, "It appears that Senator Feinstein wants a Constitution-free zone for the Internet."

He said such a law might violate the first amendment's guarantee of free speech, the fourth amendment's privacy protections, and the fifth amendment's prohibition of self-incrimination. As reported, the Senate is considering a bill sponsored by Arizona Republican John McCain and Nebraska Democrat Bob Kerrey that would slightly relax export controls while imposing strong incentives to promote the use key recovery within the United States.

In June, the bill was approved by the Commerce Committee, "but growing opposition, including from majority leader Trent Lott, may derail the bill," Pressman says. Meanwhile, a House bill sponsored Virginia Republican Bob Goodlatte dramatically reduce export controls and prohibit mandatory key escrow has been approved by several committees "but faces a significant challenge in the National Security Committee," Reuters says.

California Backs Freeing Encryption

A resolution calling on President Clinton and Congress to take immediate action to remove export barriers for encryption technology has been unanimously passed by California state lawmakers. Okayed yesterday on a 77-0 voted by the California Assembly, the resolution previously passed 38-0 in the state Senate. Reporting from Sacramento, the Reuter News Service notes the resolution does not require approval by Gov. Pete Wilson and will be forwarded to Clinton and the Congress, legislative aides said.

Speaker Cruz Bustamante, a Democrat, told the wire service, "There is a \$65 billion market worldwide for encryption technology that California companies are losing out on because of misguided federal export law." Authored by state Sen. John Vasconcellos, the resolution urges Clinton and Congress to "take immediate action to revise the current federal export

controls on the export by American companies of cryptographic products."

As reported, Congress is considering three bills to end the export controls. Bustamante added, "Because of the global availability of encryption technology, the export ban does not aid America's security interests, but does jeopardize individuals and businesses in California."

Clinton Rejects Encryption Plan

Word is the Clinton administration has reservations about a new congressional proposal that would tighten export limits on computer encoding technology, though the White House apparently does prefer it to an approach contained in earlier legislation. And in another development, Vice President Al Gore is distancing the administration from the FBI director's proposal to regulate U.S. sales of high-tech devices that maintain the privacy of computer messages.

On Capitol Hill, Under Secretary of Commerce William Reinsch told reporter Aaron Pressman of the Reuter News Service a surprise amendment approved yesterday by the House National Security Committee would give the secretary of defense veto power over encryption export decisions. Says Reinsch, "Giving the secretary of defense a veto is inconsistent with the president's executive order and inconsistent with the policies of four prior administrations. The administration thinks all relevant agencies should have a seat at the table and none should have a veto."

Pressman notes that under current policy enacted by presidential order last year, encryption export requests are reviewed by the Departments of State, Defense, Energy, Commerce and Justice, along with the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. As reported, the most powerful encryption products cannot be exported unless they contain a feature allowing the government to decode any messages covertly. The new amendment -- sponsored by Rep. Curt Weldon (R-Pennsylvania) and Rep. Ron Dellums (D-California) -- would require the president to set "the maximum level of encryption strength that could be exported from the United States ... without harm to the national security of the United States." Products at or below the established level could be exported after a one-time review specified by the secretary of commerce with the concurrence of the secretary of defense.

Reuters comments the proposal "virtually gutted" the bill to which it was attached, a measure written by Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-Virginia) that would greatly relax export controls. Pressman quotes Reinsch as saying the administration supports the "harm to the national security" standard, saying, "It gives the administration the authority it needs. We'd much rather have this" than the original.

As noted, software companies, civil libertarians and Internet user groups favor relaxing the current limits and expressed strong concerns about the Weldon amendment. Meanwhile, Associated Press writer Jeannine Aversa reports Vice President Gore, in a speech to the Software Publishers Association, says the administration is not in favor of FBI Director Louis Freeh proposal to regulate sales of high-tech devices that maintain the privacy of computer messages.

Gore reaffirmed the White House's policy against restricting the sale of such data-scrambling devices in the United States, adding, "The administration's position has not changed on encryption." As noted, Freeh last week stunned the communications industry by suggesting to a Senate subcommittee that encryption devices sold or imported into the United States be required to include a feature allowing law enforcement agencies

to unscramble coded messages.

Aversa reports, "His comments rattled industry groups, which generally oppose such a requirement, saying it would be expensive, difficult to implement and raise privacy concerns. Gore didn't specifically mention Freeh's proposal. But White House aides, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the vice president's brief comment on the administration's policy was intended to respond to Freeh and show that for now the administration is not changing its position on the sale of encryption devices in the United States."

Quarterdeck Courts Anti-Viruses

Quarterdeck Corp., best known for its computer utility software, is branching into the anti-virus program market. Reporting from Marina Del Rey, California, the Reuter News Service says Quarterdeck has acquired global licensing rights to anti-virus software technology and is set to enter the growing computer anti-virus market. ViruSweep is built on technology licensed from privately-held EliaShim Ltd. and will be integrated into its portfolio of system protection products. The wire service notes Quarterdeck's anti-virus product will go up against products made by McAfee Associates Inc., Symantec Corp. and Computer Associates International Inc.'s Cheyenne Software unit.

McAfee Sues Symantec for \$1 Billion

A \$1 billion defamation suit has been filed against virus software expert Symantec Corp. by rival McAfee Associates Inc., escalating their closely watched trade-secret court fight. From Santa Clara, California, the Reuter News Service calls the suit the latest volley involving two batches of software code that appear in two McAfee products. As reported, Symantec sued McAfee earlier this year, accusing McAfee of stealing those codes. McAfee denied the allegations.

"Even by the competitive standards of Silicon Valley," says Reuters, "the legal battle between the cross-town rivals is nasty. The chief executives of both software companies have exchanged personal barbs against each other in the press."

- ' • On April 23, Symantec accused McAfee of stealing portions of Symantec Crashguard -- a program that enhances the performances of personal computers -- and using it in McAfee PC Medic 1997, a rival product.
- ' • On July 21, Symantec expanded its lawsuit alleging that McAfee stole another 100 lines of code and used it in McAfee VirusScan.
- ' • Earlier this week, McAfee has said an internal investigation had found that the 100 lines of code in VirusScan were downloaded from the Internet by one of its programmers, not stolen from Symantec. The programmer cannot specify from which Internet site he took the code. McAfee also said in the release that the code did not perform any functions in the program and has been deleted.
- ' • Yesterday, Symantec issued a statement headlined "McAfee confirms that VirusScan contains misappropriated Symantec code," citing McAfee's statement the previous day.
- ' • Now McAfee said it sued Symantec for defamation and trade libel, deliberately twisting facts to bolster its case.

Angry McAfee general manager Zach Nelson told Reuters, "Where do we say that we stole their code? Symantec has tried to distort fact after fact, and we're tired of it." Symantec chief technical officer Enrique Salem countered, "What McAfee is trying to do is hide the facts with a diversion."

They are in a desperate situation." Stay tuned.

Microsoft Foes Tighten Alliance

Tightening an alliance against Microsoft Corp.'s dominance, IBM, Sun Microsystems Inc. and Netscape Communications Corp. are coordinating work on a universal language for developing software that works on any computer system, not just Microsoft's Windows. Business writer David E. Kalish of The Associated Press says engineers from the three firms will work together to make sure the Java language smoothly runs software formatted for different computers, ranging from Windows to Sun machines. "And," he adds, "they'll fine-tune the language to lessen problems, as well as time new releases so software developers get the latest versions at the same time."

As reported earlier, Netscape plans to use Sun technology in its browser for cruising the Internet. Meanwhile, in a third Java push, Sun announced licensing deals with three big telephone equipment makers that plan to use Java software in new phones, dubbed webphones, that can tap into the Internet. "And Sun, Netscape and several other high-tech companies -- with the notable exception of Microsoft -- proposed a technical standard aimed at helping to unclog bottlenecks that have slowed the flow of information across the Internet," Kalish reports.

Samsung Responds to Spamster

Samsung America Inc. is striking back at an unknown spamster who is reportedly sending fraudulent e-mails under the name of the South Korean electronic giant. "An unknown party continues to mass distribute fraudulent e-mail messages under the name of Samsung and its affiliates, the latest of which is titled 'Samsung Spamming Lie,'" notes a statement issued by Samsung. "As much of the Internet community is aware, these e-mails were neither written nor condoned by Samsung."

Samsung says it is working with Federal authorities to identify the individual or individuals responsible for the messages and intends to take legal action against the perpetrator when found. According to Samsung, its investigation has revealed that an unknown party has sent mass e-mails through The Microsoft Network and UUNET. Upon receipt of subpoenas, MSN and UUNET released the identities and accounts of the e-mailer. However, that information revealed forged names, phone numbers, and addresses, notes Samsung.

Tokyo ISP Sues U.S. 'Spamster'

Tokyo-based Internet service provider Typhoon Inc. filed a federal lawsuit yesterday charging a Pasadena, California, company with flooding its Internet servers with masses of "spam" e-mail advertisements and placing a false Typhoon return address on those messages. The suit filed in U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, alleges that Paging America engaged in a massive spam e-mail campaign to advertise its products and services in March and then again in May of this year.

"The Internet is not a playground for pirates and scam artists," says Typhoon legal counsel Andrew Mansfield of O'Melveny & Myers LLP. "The defendants' unlawful conduct nearly crashed Typhoon's system, and thousands of America Online customers were led to believe the spam originated with Typhoon." Typhoon is seeking injunctive relief as well as unspecified consequential and punitive damages. Typhoon's Web page can be found at <http://www.typhoon.co.jp/indexe.html>.

New Website Fights Growing Scams

Watchdogs have received nearly 100 scam complaints a month so far this year -- ranging in size from \$10 to \$10,000 -- compared with only 389 for all of 1996. "Cybercrooks are in your pocketbooks with a click of the mouse," Linda Golodny, president of the National Consumers League, told a news conference called yesterday to announce the launch of new Web pages <http://www.fraud.org/ifw.htm> intended to arm us with alerts to the 10 most-used scams.

The Associated Press quotes Susan Grant, the league's Internet Fraud Watch director, as saying the most common signs of fraud are:

- ' • Extravagant promises of profits.
- ' • Guarantees of credit regardless of bad credit history.
- ' • Suspiciously low prices.
- ' • Prizes that require up-front payments.

The league says the 10 most frequent fraud reports involve: undelivered Internet and online services; damaged, defective, misrepresented or undelivered merchandise; auction sales; pyramids and multilevel marketing; misrepresented cyberspace business opportunities and franchises; work-at-home schemes; prizes and sweepstakes; credit card offers; books and other self-help guides; and magazine subscriptions.

Court Backs Website in Suit

Putting a site on the World Wide Web doesn't in itself subject someone to being sued anywhere in the country, an influential federal appeals court in New York has ruled. This affirms an earlier dismissal of a trademark-infringement suit filed in the U.S. district court in New York by the operator of New York's famous Blue Note jazz club against a Columbia, Missouri, music club of the same name.

The Wall Street Journal reports this morning the three-judge panel of the appeals court ruled that a local operation, like the Missouri club, isn't vulnerable to being sued in a distant court merely because it creates a Web site on the Internet. A defendant must have some physical presence in New York in order to be sued there, the court said. "The ruling was the first by a federal appeals court to clarify this question," the Journal notes. "The issue had created some confusion among businesses affected by Internet activities." The New York club doesn't plan to appeal, said its attorney, Dorothy Weber of Shukat Arrow Hafer & Weber.

Software Addresses Net Addiction

Solid Oak Software Inc., publisher of the CYBERSitter Internet access control program, says it has developed software designed to combat Internet addiction. The Santa Barbara, California, company's CYBERTimer allows parents to specify a maximum amount of time online a child can spend on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. Additionally, parents can specify a time period when Internet access will be allowed. "We are seeing numerous stories appearing in the media about children and adults alike who are spending way too much time online," says Marc Kanter, a Solid Oak vice president. CYBERTimer is available for downloading directly from www.solidoak.com and is free for personal use.

'Net Addict' Handed Probation

A Cincinnati, Ohio, woman described by police as an "Internet addict" has

been placed on two years' probation after pleading guilty to charges she neglected her three small children while spending as much as 12 hours a day on her home computer. The 24-year-old woman, whose name ironically is Sandra Hacker, "kept her three children in deplorably filthy conditions in a separate room of her apartment, while devoting her time to the Internet," the Reuter News Service reports.

In Cincinnati Municipal Court yesterday, Judge William Mallory also fined Hacker \$100 and court costs and suspended a 180-day jail sentence on condition that she take parenting classes under supervision of probation officials. Defense attorney John Burlew told Reuters the children -- ages 2, 3, and 5 -- have been in the custody of her estranged husband, Alexander Hacker, since the defendant's was arrested June 14 on the neglect charges. Permanent custody rights will be determined in a divorce proceeding in which the couple is now involved, he said.

Capture Leads to \$10K Reward

A \$10,000 reward has been given to an unidentified Internet user credited by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement for the capture in Mexico of escaped murderer Jesus Juan Fleitas. Reporting from Tallahassee, Florida, United Press International quotes state officials as saying the person saw Fleitas' picture on TV's America's Most Wanted, then used the Internet to match his photos and notify authorities. The department adds that without the Floridian's help, Fleitas likely would have posted bail at a Mexican jail and disappeared once again.

UPI says the agency's Jim Chambliss declined to identify the person or even specify the sex. Chambliss did say the person was in Mexico when Fleitas' picture was published in a newspaper following his arrest in a home robbery attempt and shooting. He said the Floridian remembered Fleitas from a report on the America's Most Wanted television show. The person then used a computer in Mexico to call up Fleitas' picture on the FDLE website and when he saw the match he called U.S. authorities. "To give credit where it's due," Chambliss says, "it actually was the marriage of two leading media technologies that did it. This person first saw Fleitas' picture on television, then they used the Internet to make the identification."

Oops -- 'Scuse the E-Mail

A Michigan state lawmaker is red-faced today after an aide apparently clicked the wrong mouse button and sent a critical e-mail comment to a leading pro-gun group. Reporting from Lansing, United Press International says the aide to state Sen. Leon Stille was trying to electronically tell a colleague he thinks Brass Roots members are "a bit out in right field" and "a bunch of wackos."

But -- oh, you guessed it -- the aide sent the e-mail message to the very target of his critique. "What was intended as an interoffice message on State Capitol computers," says the wire service, "wound up in the electronic mailbox of Hazel Park-based Brass Roots, which sponsors annual rallies on the Capitol steps."

The wire service says aide Robb Kennedy was giving his opinion of Brass Roots and whether the senator should attend next weekend's "educational forum" on concealed weapons legislation. UPI notes Brass Roots says Michigan is one of 19 states that "has yet to reform their laws on concealed weapons." In an interview with a Detroit Free Press columnist, the colleague Kennedy was trying to message says the stray e-mail was due to "an unfortunate click of the mouse."

Clinton Muffs New Net Funding

Missteps by the Clinton administration in seeking adequate funding from Congress apparently now will delay the Next Generation Internet initiative. Reporter Aaron Pressman of the Reuter News Service notes the administration sought \$100 million for next year. However, Pressman reports, the House has approved only \$78 million and the Senate just \$35 million. A conference committee will reconcile the two appropriations.

"We won't be able to ramp up as quickly," says Henry Kelly, associate director of the White House's Office of Science and Technology Policy, "but this is a very flexible community and they're going to be able to re-adapt." As reported, the Next Generation Internet project aims to send data at 1,000 times the speed of today's net. Higher speeds and improved reliability could spur a host of new uses for the network, some with live sound and video.

"As a result of the lower funding," Pressman reports, "the project will take longer to meet its goal of connecting 100 universities to the faster network. ... Some basic research needed to enable faster networking will also be delayed." As reported, some lawmakers criticize the administration for failing to provide details about the project, neglecting rural states and overlapping with a university and private sector initiative called Internet2.

Says Chairman Rep. James Sensenbrenner (R-Wisconsin) of the House Science Committee, "I don't think the administration has learned its lesson and the consequences of the delay and what to do to repair the damage as best as possible." Pressman notes that in April, the Science Committee barred spending on a portion of the project overseen by the National Science Foundation but reversed course and boosted spending in July after administration officials provided additional details.

Other committees have rejected or reduced funding requests for parts of the project in the Departments of Energy and Defense. Sensenbrenner told administration officials during a hearing yesterday, "I hate to run around with a button that says 'I told you so,' but I got it on today. From what you have just said, it does not appear the administration has any game plan on what to do during this period of time when we're working in conference."

Meanwhile, Pressman has found another problem lurking in the project: the possible inclusion of funding for a controversial computer encoding technology known as key recovery. "The administration is pushing key recovery as a means of allowing law enforcement agencies to crack computer coded messages among criminals or terrorists," he writes. "But software firms, civil libertarians and Internet user groups strongly oppose the approach as infringing on privacy rights and reducing the security of electronic communications."

Search Engines Satisfy Users

Most users of Internet search engines and navigational sites are more than satisfied with their favorite provider, finds a new survey by NPD Online Research of Port Washington, New York. NPD polled a total of more than 22,000 visitors to the Alta Vista, Excite, Infoseek, Lycos, WebCrawler and Yahoo! sites in a survey sponsored by the six search engines. Respondent ratings of very good/excellent ranged from 78 percent to 92 percent among the six sites; excellent ratings ranged from 30 percent to 48 percent among

the sites.

The survey's respondents were also virtually unanimous on what makes a site a winner. More than 90 percent of respondents from each search engine said ease of use, speed of loading and response, reliability and accuracy of results and organized and up-to-date information are the most important site features. On the other hand, respondents ranked contests among the least important features attracting them to a particular search engine; only 24 percent to 34 percent of respondents felt that it was important or very important to have contests on a site. Respondents also placed little importance in the fact that a site looks good (44 percent to 60 percent of the respondents said it was important or very important) and that the site be fun to use (43 percent to 68 percent).

Yahoo Signs CD Deal

Search engine giant Yahoo Inc. has signed an agreement to make CDnow the premier music seller featured on Yahoo. CDnow is an Internet music store which offers more than 250,000 music-oriented products. Reporting from Santa Clara, California, the Reuter News Service quotes Yahoo officials as saying the firm will offer users direct links to related CDnow (www.cdnow.com) music products from Yahoo music-related search results and music category pages. Also, CDnow will be integrated into My Yahoo with special content, Yahoo Yellow Pages, the Yahoo Metro sites, the Visa Shopping Guide by Yahoo and the Netscape Guide by Yahoo. Look for CDnow to be the exclusive premier provider for music products to be promoted in these Yahoo areas. As part of the deal CDnow will receive extensive promotional exposure throughout Yahoo.

Intel Offers Faster Pentium

A speedy Pentium chip -- designed specifically for laptop computers and that is smaller, uses less power and generates less heat -- is being introduced by Intel Corp. this week. Previously code-named "Tillamook," the new chip is part of what the Reuter News Service says is Intel's plan to make more microprocessors geared toward portable computers, the fastest growing part of the PC market.

The wire service finds about 20 computer makers unveiling laptops - one only as thick as two legal pads stacked together -- based on the new chip. The new mobile Pentium features Intel's MMX multimedia-enhancing technology and comes in two speeds, 200 and 233 megahertz, which are the same as mid- and high-range desktop PCs. It consumes 3.9 watts of electricity, about half that of a desktop model running at comparable speeds. Reuters notes laptop computer sales are expected to grow 15 percent to 20 percent a year for the next few years, faster than the rest of the PC industry. In 1997 alone, about \$13 billion worth of laptops will be sold worldwide.

Win 3.1 WordPerfect Suite 7 Ships

Corel Corp. has begun shipping Corel WordPerfect Suite 7 for Windows 3.1x. The suite includes the WordPerfect 7 word processor, Quattro Pro 7 spreadsheet software, Presentations 7 presentation program, Paradox 7 database manager, Time Line project management software and CorelFLOW 2 charting program. Also provided are the Envoy 1.0a electronic publishing tool, Netscape Navigator Web browser, Sidekick 2.0 personal organizer and Dashboard 3.0 Windows control panel, as well as 10,000 clip art images and 1,000 fonts.

"Corel recognizes that there is a substantial user base working in the Windows 3.1x environment," says Michael Cowpland, Corel's president and CEO. "We are pleased to offer a comprehensive solution to users of the 16-bit environment. The tight integration and ease-of-use of the suite makes it easy for users to upgrade to the 32-bit program at some stage in the future." Corel WordPerfect Suite 7 for Windows 3.1x sells for \$425. Upgrades are priced at \$149.

HP Offers New Ink-Jet Printer

Hewlett-Packard Co. has introduced the DeskJet 720C home printer line and DeskJet 890C professional printer series. The new ink-jet models replace the current DeskJet 820C and DeskJet 870C printers in the U.S. market. HP notes that the new printers offer multiple technological breakthroughs, design improvements, increased duty cycles, network connectivity options and added versatility. Prices for the DeskJet 720C and DeskJet 890C models are expected to begin at about \$349 and \$449, respectively.

Zoom Pledges Free Modem Upgrade

Zoom Telephonics Inc. says it will offer a free software upgrade to the ITU 56K bps standard for all of its internal, external and PC Card K56flex modems currently shipping. The offer applies to customers in the U.S. and Canada, and will remain in effect for modems purchased through June 30, 1998. The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) is expected to set a definitive 56K bps standard sometime in 1998.

The Boston-based modem maker notes that all currently- shipping Zoom K56flex modems have software-loadable flash memory, programmable digital signal processors and programmable controllers that allow the modems to be software upgraded to the ITU standard. The company says the applicable code will be placed on its Web site for customers to download free at their convenience. In the event that a software upgrade to the ITU standard is not possible, Zoom says it will rework or replace any qualifying modem sent to it for a maximum charge of \$19.

"We believe that Zoom is the first major K56flex modem manufacturer to announce a definitive, customer-friendly, easy-to-understand 56K upgrade policy," says Frank Manning, Zoom's president. "Motorola and Diamond say that a shipping and handling charge may be necessary, but don't state a maximum charge. Many other modem manufacturers mislead potential customers into thinking that a software upgrade will definitely work. Because the ITU standard is still to be determined, it's important to have an upgrade program that is clear about any potential upgrade cost if a software upgrade is not possible."

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Market Bulletin	Windows Product Team	Microsoft Windowsr
		z Summer 1997

Microsoft Windows 98 Overview

The Microsoft Windows 98 operating system makes computing easier, more reliable, faster, and is fully integrated with the Internet. Building on Windows 95 innovation as the easiest path to a 32-bit desktop, Windows 98 defines cutting-edge capabilities-such as enabling powerful new hardware technologies and entertainment platforms-while at the same time maintaining the best support for older Windows-based applications and technologies. For corporations, Windows 98 provides new manageability features that help reduce total cost of ownership (TCO). Windows 98 will also be the fastest platform for running the new Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0.

PRODUCT OVERVIEW

Windows 98-previously code-named "Memphis"-builds on the innovations of Windows 95. In addition to countless refinements and improvements, including many user-requested features, all users will benefit from interface enhancements that make Windows 98-based PCs easier to use. New wizards, utilities, and resources proactively keep systems running more smoothly. Performance is faster for many common tasks such as application loading, system startup, and shut down. Finally, full integration with the Web makes Windows 98-based systems easier to use, more powerful, and more entertaining.

Windows 98 provides compelling new features for every type of computer user:

- Home System Upgrades. Home users who are upgrading existing systems will especially appreciate the increased reliability and Web integration enabled by Windows 98. For example, user interface enhancements make navigation easier, such as single-click opening, icon highlighting, forward/backward buttons, and an easy to customize Start Menu. New wizards and utilities, such as System File Checker, keep PCs running faster and more smoothly. Windows 98 makes computers more entertaining and easier to use by putting Web resources directly on the desktop. Integration with Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 provides a new e-mail client and desktop information manager, Outlook Express, and supports Internet conferencing capabilities with Microsoft NetMeeting software.
- Corporate System Upgrades. Corporations will especially appreciate increased manageability of Windows 98-based systems. For example, Windows 98 supports the policy-based, central management guidelines and features outlined in Microsoft's Zero Administration Initiative for Windows. New utilities such as Dr. Watson and System Information Utility makes it easier for product support staff to diagnose and correct problems. Windows 98 provides an easy Upgrade Wizard from Windows 95 and Windows 3.x-based systems.
- New Hardware Purchasers. Support for the newest generation of hardware-including cutting-edge media platforms-makes new Windows 98-based systems significantly easier to use, more entertaining, and more like everyday "appliances." For example, OnNow instantly starts a new PC, making it more like turning on a stereo or TV. Support for the Universal Serial Bus enables the next generation of Plug and Play hardware. Support for the industry standard IEEE 1394 Bus allows users to control VCRs, stereos, and other consumer electronics from their PCs. In many ways, Windows 98 redefines the PC's role as an entertainment center by combining previously separate components, such as television, DVD and the Internet, and integrating them with the powerful processing and communications capabilities of the PC. This integration, such as combining television and HTML, results in an experience that is more rich and more convenient. For example, you can review and search for your favorite TV programs with the built-in Program Guide, then instantly view any show on your PC, or set reminders to watch shows at a later time. Producers can also deliver Enhanced Television programming, which will add sports statistics or cooking recipes alongside traditional television shows.

KEY WINDOWS 98 FEATURES AND BENEFITS

New Windows 98 features and benefits fall into six key areas. A more complete feature highlights list can be found at [Windows 98 is currently in beta testing and is expected to ship in the first quarter of 1998.](#)

- Easier to Use
 - User interface enhancements make navigation easier, such as single-click launching, icon highlighting, forward/backward buttons, and an

easy to customize Start Menu.

- Support for hardware innovations such as Universal Serial Bus (USB) enable more powerful device detection and the next generation of Plug and Play hardware.
- On-line Help provides comprehensive, continually updated support information for Microsoft products.
- Multi-monitor Support for up to eight monitors that can run at different resolutions gives users more "real estate" for running applications, including more exciting game play.
- Advanced Configuration and Power Interface (ACPI) supports easier device management on new PCs and enhanced battery performance on new mobile PCs.
- More Reliable
 - Countless refinements and improvements keep systems running smoothly.
 - Windows Update, a new Web-based resource site, allows registered users of Windows 98 to keep their PCs up-to-date by continually providing the latest drivers and operating system files on an on-going basis.
 - Windows 98 can regularly test your hard disk, system files, and configuration information to increase the system reliability, and in many cases automatically fix problems.
 - Enhanced backup and restore functionality supports more tape drives and the latest hardware.
 - Date-dependent components within Windows 98 are Year 2000 ready.
- Faster
 - Application loading, system startup, and shut down time are faster, based on early performance testing with beta software.
 - OnNow technology provides "instant on" capability, rather than requiring users to boot up every time.
 - The Windows 98 Tune-Up Wizard helps get faster system performance.
 - Enhanced FAT32 File System stores files more efficiently and frees up hard drive space.
- Web Integration
 - Windows 98 will be the fastest platform to run the new Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0.
 - Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 includes the Outlook Express, a new e-mail client and collaboration tool; NetMeeting for Internet conferencing and whiteboarding; NetShowT networked multimedia software for on-demand audio and video capabilities; FrontPad personal Web-page editing tool; and Personal Web Server which makes any Windows 98-based system into a personal Web server.
 - The Active Desktop interface puts Internet and intranet pages directly on a user's desktop.
 - With Channels, users can subscribe to Web sites, including many leading content providers like Disney and Time-Warner.
 - An enhanced Windows 98 Explorer integrates local, intranet, and Internet resources into a single, logical view. For example, URLs can now be accessed directly from the Windows 98 Explorer.
 - New Internet access is easy with a new Internet Connection Wizard that "talks" to your Internet provider for the correct configuration information.
 - Enhancements to Dial-Up Networking include the ability to link and synchronize multiple modems and an ISDN Connection Wizard makes it easier to configure hardware.
 - Support for video and broadcast provides super-fast bandwidth for accessing the Internet.
- More Entertaining
 - Support for DVD and digital audio delivers high-quality digital movies and audio direct to your TV or PC monitor.
 - Support for IEEE 1394 bus provides an industry-standard interface to control VCRs, stereos, and other consumer electronic devices from a

Windows 98-based PC.

- DirectX APIs provides graphics and video performance that exceeds console game systems, and support for forced-feedback joysticks to enhance the gaming experience.
- Watch TV on your PC and review and search for your favorite TV programs with the built in Program Guide.
- Support for Enhanced Television, which combines television and HTML content, delivers new entertainment possibilities.
- More Manageable for Corporations
 - Support for the Zero Administration Initiative for Windows helps reduce total cost of ownership.
 - Dr. Watson and System Information Utility makes it easier for product support staff to diagnose and correct problems.
 - Upgrade Wizard provides smooth migration paths from Windows 95 and Windows 3.x-based systems.

OTHER INNOVATIONS

Windows Update

Windows Update is a new Web-based resource site that allows registered users of Windows 98 to get more out of their PC. Designed to help users improve their computing experience, Windows Update keeps users systems up-to-date by providing access to the latest drivers and operating system files on an on-going basis. Windows Update also makes computing easier and more enjoyable by providing product assistance that is constantly updated, while allowing users to easily find the answers they need.

Note: Some capabilities, such as ACPI, DVD, multimonitor support, OnNow, and television, require appropriate hardware support.

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Contents

Government Will Appeal Encryption
Case
Telecom Manufacturers, Networkers
Unite To Speed Up Internet
Computer Companies Step Up
Political Donations
Apple Clone Owners To Pay Full
Price For OS Upgrade

Bell Canada, Netscape Team Up On
Electronic Commerce

Deutsche Telekom Chooses VocalTec
For Internet Telephony
Dell Pioneers Individual Leasing
Option
Massachusetts Repeals Internet
Sales Tax
Drudge's Apology Doesn't Stop
Blumenthal's Libel Suit
Apple, Power Computing Huddle Over
Licensing Deal
Massachusetts To Refund Internet
Taxes
Five Different Bills Include
Funding For Next-Generation
Internet
"Deep Blue" Gets Deeper
PC Fixx Seeks To Franchise PC
Repair
Next Generation Of Software Will Be
Nonproprietary, Says Ellison
Clinton Administration Flip-Flops
On Encryption Issue
America Online To Operate
CompuServe
IBM Nixes Net PCs
Power Computing Gets Rights To Mac
OS 8
Motorola And IBM Rethink Purpose Of
PowerPC Chips
Dell Changes Production System For
OptiPlex Line
Disposable DVDs
Gelernter On The Beauty Of Software
"Amazing Grace" Showcases
Technology
The Internet Goes To Television
Airfare Web Sites Want Buyers, Not
Lookers
Microsoft Buys Stake In Translation
Software Company
Integrated Circuits And Musical
Birthday Cards
Software Piracy
Lower-Priced PCs Hit The "Sweet
Spot"
Security Issues Are Risk-Management
Issues
High-Level Cracking In Canada
Electronic Monographs Are "Great
Advertising"
Defending The Right To Hyperlink
Digital To Offer Internet Shopping
Systems

GOVERNMENT WILL APPEAL ENCRYPTION CASE

The U.S. government announced its intention to appeal a recent U.S. District Court ruling that treating an electronic version of encryption software code differently from a printed version was "irrational,"

"baffling," and "makes little or no sense and is untenable." The case was part of a long-running dispute between a University of Illinois professor and the Clinton administration over government restrictions on the export of encryption programs. The professor was denied an export license for the electronic copy of the source code for an encryption program he developed as a graduate student, but was later granted approval to export a printed version. In response to the government's appeal, the judge has issued a stay of the injunction, limited to the particular source code cited in the case. "Because the legal questions at issue are novel, complex and of public importance, the injunctive relief should be as narrow as possible pending appeal," she says. (MSNBC 29 Aug 97)

TELECOM MANUFACTURERS, NETWORKERS UNITE TO SPEED UP INTERNET

Telefon AB LM Ericsson, Northern Telecom, Siemens AG, 3Com, and UUNet are investing \$40 million in Silicon start-up Juniper Networks in the hope of jump-starting efforts to speed up Internet networking technology. Juniper plans to combine advanced chip technology with a new type of switch router to achieve top networking speeds of 2.4 gigabits per second and throughput rates of 60 gigabits per second or more. Meanwhile, Cisco Systems is already running field trials of its Gigabit Switch Router, which offers speeds up to 622 megabits per second, and plans for next year call for boosting speeds up to 2.5 gigabits per second. "We're very interested in what Juniper is doing, as well as several other start-ups and some established companies such as Cisco and 3Com," says MCI senior VP Vinton Cerf, who notes that to keep up with traffic, "we are going to require speeds of 2.4 gigabits between our nodes by next year." (Wall Street Journal 29 Aug 97)

COMPUTER COMPANIES STEP UP POLITICAL DONATIONS

"The Digital Age has finally arrived in Washington," says the author of a recent report on computer industry campaign donations and lobbying activities. Published by the Center for Responsive Politics, the report notes, "In the 1995-1996 election cycle, the computer industry donated \$7.3 million in [political action committee] money, soft money, and individual contributions to federal candidates and parties. This is 52% more than was spent in the 1991-1992 election cycle...The industry has also learned to use sophisticated techniques such as bundling, in which a particular organization or interest group gives a cluster of contributions to a particular candidate over a specific period of time... Not only is the computer industry growing rapidly, but there are almost a dozen bills in the House and Senate that could affect the industry's bottom line." Priority issues for computer execs include the regulation of shareholder lawsuits, taxes, encryption and the World Intellectual Property Organization treaty negotiations and related legislation. (TechWire Aug 29 97)

APPLE CLONE OWNERS TO PAY FULL PRICE FOR OS UPGRADE

Buyers of Apple Macintosh clones will have to purchase their upgrade to the new Mac OS 8 operating system through computer stores or mail order, for the full price of \$69.95, rather than the \$9.95 version available to authentic Mac owners. The one exception is buyers who purchased their machines between June 22 and August 1, and who ordered the software from Apple before August 1 -- they will be eligible for the \$9.95 Up-To-Date option. Apple made its decision to penalize clone owners after it became embroiled in a spat over licensing the new system to clone makers: "We thought it was reasonable to include the clone systems in the Up-To-Date

upgrade program when we expected to come to a quick agreement on the new licensing deals," says an Apple spokesman. "Obviously that's not going to happen now." (San Jose Mercury News 30 Aug 97)

DEUTSCHE TELEKOM CHOOSES VOCALTEC FOR INTERNET TELEPHONY

Deutsche Telekom says it will invest in VocalTec Communications and use its products and services to offer customers Internet telephony services. The two companies are already working together on the T-NetCall service, which Deutsche Telekom has been testing over the past month, and the new arrangement will give Deutsche Telekom a 21% stake in U.S.-based VocalTec. Analysts predict that shortly after the turn of the century, 50% of the world's communications will be carried over the Internet. (InfoWorld Electric 29 Aug 97)

DELL PIONEERS INDIVIDUAL LEASING OPTION

Dell Computer has started a leasing option for individual customers, the first such program to be offered by a major computer maker, say analysts. Leasing a computer rather than purchasing appeals to people worried about the rapid obsolescence of PCs and to those unable to come up with the full amount of up-front cash. The move also ties consumers to Dell machines over a period of years: "It's much cheaper to sell to a customer you already have than it is to win over a customer you don't have," says an industry analyst. About 18% of the corporate PCs ordered this year will be paid for through a leasing arrangement, up from 5% three years ago. (Wall Street Journal 29 Aug 97)

MASSACHUSETTS REPEALS INTERNET SALES TAX

Acting Massachusetts Governor Paul Cellucci says he will sign a budget measure repealing the state sales tax on Internet transactions. (Computer Reseller News 28 Aug 97)

DRUDGE'S APOLOGY DOESN'T STOP BLUMENTHAL'S LIBEL SUIT

A White House spokesman has acknowledged that President Clinton and Vice President Gore approved of Presidential aide Sidney Blumenthal's decision to file a \$30 million libel suit against online gossip columnist Matt Drudge. Drudge had reported that Blumenthal "has a spousal abuse past that has been effectively covered up," but when Blumenthal vehemently denied the allegation, Drudge quickly issued a retraction. But Blumenthal wasn't mollified, and proceeded with his lawsuit. In his August 29th "Drudge Report," Drudge says he is "disappointed that this lawsuit was filed even after I retracted my original report and publicly apologized for it. The fact that Mr. Blumenthal's 137-page complaint seeks to recover \$30 million from me has no relation to anything that I have done -- unless the White House views me as a reporter who should not be in business. The extraordinary admission at the August 28 White House press briefing that both the President and Vice President told Mr. Blumenthal they would support him in this action suggests this White House simply lacks respect for basic principles of free speech and the First Amendment guarantee of a free press. What the White House is doing in supporting this lawsuit should arouse grave concern among all those who cherish our Constitution." Drudge has been widely criticized by mainstream journalists, who have accused him of practicing shoddy journalism. (Edupage 17 Aug 97, Reuter 28 Aug 97, Drudge Report 29 Aug 97)

APPLE, POWER COMPUTING HUDDLE OVER LICENSING DEAL

Apple Computer and Power Computing Corp. are negotiating a deal, the details of which have not been disclosed, to resolve their ongoing dispute over licensing terms for Apple's new Mac OS8 operating system. People close to the negotiations say the new arrangement likely will entail Power paying Apple higher licensing fees on more powerful Macs. (Wall Street Journal 2 Sep 97) Meanwhile, InfoWorld Electric reports that the negotiations are more likely to result in Power Computing renouncing its Apple license and turning its full-time attention to manufacturing Wintel machines. (InfoWorld Electric 2 Sep 97)

MASSACHUSETTS TO REFUND INTERNET TAXES

The Massachusetts law signed Friday repealing state taxes on Internet services has been made retroactive to 1990. "Prior to the moratorium, Internet service providers in Massachusetts were required to collect and remit sales tax on their services, since they were classified as telecommunications services," says the chief taxation officer for a tax software provider. "The new legislation now excludes Internet access, electronic mail, electronic bulletin board, and Web hosting services from the definition of telecommunications services... By passing this legislation, Massachusetts is attempting to stem the tide of computer users who may have selected out-of-state Internet service providers." The U.S. Congress is considering a similar nationwide moratorium on Internet taxes. (TechInvestor 1 Sep 97)

FIVE DIFFERENT BILLS INCLUDE FUNDING FOR NEXT-GENERATION INTERNET

Five of the 13 bills spending bills still to be dealt with by Congress when it returns to work this week include provisions for funding various federal agencies efforts to participate in building the Next-Generation Internet. Government efforts will parallel the university-sponsored Internet 2 activities. The agencies will work directly with the Internet 2 project to help tie its high-performance campus backbones into the larger national infrastructure. Under President Clinton's proposed spending plan, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency would receive \$40 million; the Energy Department \$35 million; the National Science Foundation and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration \$10 million each; and the National Institute of Standards and Technology \$5 million. The National Library of Medicine has said it will also try to commit \$5 million to the project. (Chronicle of Higher Education 5 Sep 97)

"DEEP BLUE" GETS DEEPER

The IBM RS/6000 SP computer "Deep Blue" -- widely known for its chess victory over world chess champion Garry Kasparov -- has received hardware and software enhancements expected to make that product line 58% faster. Much of the speed increase is due to the latest version of IBM's 604e Power PC microprocessor. (New York Times 1 Sep 97)

PC FIXX SEEKS TO FRANCHISE PC REPAIR

A small Seattle firm called PC Fixx is hoping to franchise the computer repair business, offering Nordstrom-style service with McDonald's-style convenience. The company, which is currently seeking investors, plans to acquire computer repair businesses around the country and convert them to PC Fixx franchises. Using a network of repair depots and service vans linked to a telecommunications center, PC Fixx could offer repairs in a matter of hours rather than days. A study by Dataquest estimates that the U.S. PC repair market will grow at 21% a year to nearly \$1.9 billion in

2001. (Tampa Tribune 1 Sep 97)

NEXT GENERATION OF SOFTWARE WILL BE NONPROPRIETARY, SAYS ELLISON

Oracle CEO Larry Ellison says the age of domination by one software company's technical standards is over: "The next generation of software will not, cannot, be based on proprietary technology that belongs to one company. We're living in the dawn of the information age, not the dawn of the Microsoft Age or the dawn of the Age of Redmond. The next generation of computing, network computing, will not be dominated by any one company or any one person. The age in which we live can't be controlled by a single human being. Nation-states resent it, individuals resent it." (Upside Sep 97)

CLINTON ADMINISTRATION FLIP-FLOPS ON ENCRYPTION ISSUE

Reversing its previous assurances that it was opposed to domestic encryption controls and determined not to regulate the development of Internet commerce, the Clinton Administration has drafted legislation that would require all encryption technology to include a "trap door" feature allowing immediate decoding of any message by law enforcement officials armed with a court order. The plan, which is opposed both by civil libertarians and by the technology industry, would also require telephone companies and Internet service providers to use the same feature in any encryption systems they offer. (New York Times 7 Sep 97)

AMERICA ONLINE TO OPERATE COMPUSERVE

America Online has negotiated a complex deal with WorldCom that will result in AOL acquiring and operating CompuServe. AOL intends to keep CompuServe's content focused on business and technology issues: "AOL is going to use its scale and its resources to make it more focused and efficient in servicing the business and professional market," says a source close to the negotiation. The arrangement calls for WorldCom to purchase CompuServe as part of a \$1.2 billion stock swap, then to turn it over to America Online, along with \$175 million in cash, in exchange for AOL's ANS network service. The deal will give AOL some much needed cash, and a boost of about 30% in subscribership. WorldCom will get to keep CompuServe's global data network, which, in combination with the ANS network, will beef up WorldCom's data networking capabilities. (Miami Herald 8 Sep 97)

IBM NIXES NET PCs

Three months after demonstrating a prototype, IBM now says it won't pursue the NetPC market after all. The NetPC is a stripped down version of a desktop computer, priced at around \$1,000 and based on Intel microprocessors and Microsoft operating software. "There was a herd mentality about NetPCs and now we see some of the breakup of the herd," says the president of a Washington, D.C.-based computer consulting firm. IBM says its customers have indicated they'd prefer to spend a little more money and get the network and software management features found on full-fledged PCs. With hardware prices continuing to fall, "nobody can give a compelling reason why a NetPC makes sense," says one PC vendor. (Wall Street Journal 8 Sep 97)

POWER COMPUTING GETS RIGHTS TO MAC OS 8

After cutting a deal last week wherein Apple Computer will acquire Power

Computing's Macintosh assets for \$100 million, Apple has said as part of the arrangement, Power Computing now has the rights to bundle Mac OS 8 with its clones until Dec. 31, when the assets transfer is complete. Power Computing has cut prices on its Macintosh compatibles, and sources say it's sold more than \$1.4 million worth of its PowerTower Pro systems since its deal with Apple was announced. Meanwhile, Taiwan-based UMAX Computer has reached an agreement to include the Mac OS 8 system on computers sold in Asia; the arrangement for North American sales is still being worked out. (Computer Reseller News 7 Sep 97)

MOTOROLA AND IBM RETHINK PURPOSE OF POWERPC CHIPS

Though the original purpose of the PowerPC chip (co-developed by Apple, IBM and Motorola) was to compete against Intel's domination of the market for microprocessors used by PCs, Motorola and IBM have now decided to refocus that family of chips for use in noncomputer consumer electronics devices (e.g., cellular phones) and industrial applications (e.g., factory robots). Current speculation is that Apple leader Steve Jobs may use Intel processors rather than PowerPCs for the Rhapsody operating system it is developing for its next-generation Macintoshes, thereby reducing the already weak demand for PowerPC chips. (New York Times 9 Sep 97)

DELL CHANGES PRODUCTION SYSTEM FOR OPTIPLEX LINE

Dell Computer is squeezing more productivity out of its production line by moving to cell manufacturing, using one or two workers to build an entire machine from start to finish. Beginning with its OptiPlex line of PCs geared toward the corporate market, Dell's director of production says the new system cuts the time it takes to make a PC to eight hours from 10: "We have reduced or eliminated wait time for the product as it moves through the process. We've reduced the length of time it takes to assemble the product. We've reduced the number of touches (number of people handling individual parts) and just overall improved the flow." (Investor's Business Daily 8 Sep 97)

DISPOSABLE DVDs

Digital Video Express, a company backed by Circuit City Stores and a Los Angeles entertainment-law firm, is developing a disposable digital video disk aimed at consumers who would prefer to rent a movie for an evening, rather than spend the money to purchase the film in DVD format. The new Divx design is not compatible with existing DVD players; new Divx players will cost about \$100 more than the current models being sold. Viewers could pay a rental-like fee of under \$5 per disk, have access to the movie for 48 hours after they first start watching it, and then throw the disk away when they were finished. If, instead, they felt like seeing it again, they could conduct an electronic transaction via modem to reactivate the disk. Consumers would also have the choice of making a higher one-time payment (likely to be below \$20) for limitless viewing. The disposable option undercuts the basic business model favored by current DVD proponents who envision consumers building permanent libraries of movies at premium prices. "We think this product ought to be put into the market to let the consumer decide what they want," says the chairman and CEO of Circuit City Stores, who holds the same titles in Digital Video Express. Walt Disney Co., DreamWorks SKG, Paramount Pictures and Universal Pictures have all agreed to provide titles for Divx release. (Wall Street Journal 9 Sep 97)

GELERNTER ON THE BEAUTY OF SOFTWARE

"Most computer technologists don't like to discuss it, but the importance of beauty is a consistent (if sometimes inconspicuous) thread in the software literature. Beauty is more important in computing than anywhere else in technology... Beauty is important in engineering terms because software is so complicated... Beauty is our most reliable guide to achieving software's ultimate goal: to break free of the computer, to break free conceptually. Software is stuff unlike any other... Software's goal is to escape this gravity field, and every key step in software history has been a step away from the computer, toward forgetting about the machine and its physical structure and limitations -- forgetting that it can hold only so many bytes, that its memory is made of fixed size cells, that you refer to each cell by a numerical address. Software needn't accept those rules and limitations. But as we throw off the limits, what guides us? How do we know where to head? Beauty is the best guide we have." (Adapted from "Machine Beauty: Elegance and the Heart of Computing," by David Gelernter, Discover Sep 97)

"AMAZING GRACE" SHOWCASES TECHNOLOGY

The USS Hopper, the Navy's second-ever ship to be named after a woman, is a part of a new class of "stealth ships," demonstrating the latest in marine design and computer technology. Named after Rear Adm. Grace Murray Hopper, a computer pioneer credited with coining the term "bug" when she found a moth in a switching contact, the ship is affectionately nicknamed "Amazing Grace." During her 40 years in the Navy, Hopper specialized in computer programming and developed a programming language based on a series of commands rather than elaborate mathematical codes, a breakthrough that cleared the way for modern computing. The 500-foot long destroyer's control panel has a helm that looks more like a car's steering wheel, giving it a video game aura. The ship's hull and superstructure have slanted sides to deflect radar, and the Navy calls it "one of the most capable warships ever built." (San Jose Mercury News 6 Sep 97)

THE INTERNET GOES TO TELEVISION

A group of companies in the cable industry is ready to begin offering low-cost, high-speed Internet access to standard television sets with an ordinary set-top cable converter box, without the need for a PC or any additional equipment. For a fee of no more than \$12 a month, the service will at first be available only to subscribers in Philadelphia and St. Louis, with other cities added next year. The coalition of companies includes Worldgate Communications of Bensalem, Pennsylvania, along with backers such as Citicorp, Motorola, and a number of cable system operators and major advertising agencies. Consultant Richard Doherty says: "Worldgate is Web TV and Microsoft's worst nightmare. They have the cheapest cost of infrastructure, and they can switch the Internet on for more Americans than anyone in the country." (New York Times 11 Sep 97)

AIRFARE WEB SITES WANT BUYERS, NOT LOOKERS

Expedia (owned by Microsoft), Travelocity (owned by American Airlines' parent company), and other Web sites that provide travel services are trying to make sure that visitors don't spend too much time looking at price quotes without eventually buying an airline ticket. A travel Web site must pay a fee every time it accesses an airline computer reservation system to obtain a price quote, so the site has a definite incentive to discourage pure window-shopping. Expedia says that "if a lot of people use the site without buying, it saps the system resources and can make it slower." (USA Today 10 Sep 97)

MICROSOFT BUYS STAKE IN TRANSLATION SOFTWARE COMPANY

Microsoft is buying 20% of Trados GmbH, a German-based maker of translation software, to increase its ability to make local versions of Microsoft software products which typically are shipped in more than 30 languages. Trados software does not perform machine translation but instead stores phrases and sentences after they have been translated, so that when similar or identical phrases recur the software automatically provides the translation. (San Jose Mercury News 10 Sep 97)

INTEGRATED CIRCUITS AND MUSICAL BIRTHDAY CARDS

Now 73 years old, Jack Kilby, who invented the integrated circuit at a Texas Instruments laboratory in 1958, marvels at how much impact his invention has had on the world. "I am continuously being surprised by some of the products coming onto the market. Some of them are fascinating... Musical Christmas and birthday cards, neckties that play tunes. I certainly couldn't have foreseen those." Looking back on the microchip revolution, Kilby says: "It didn't happen overnight. It has been the result of 40 years of hard work by tens of thousands of people." (Reuter 9 Sep 97)

SOFTWARE PIRACY

Vice President Al Gore told the Software Publishers Association that U.S. government departments and agencies have been ordered to crack down on pirated software within their offices. While piracy is a hot issue for software makers, the SPA doubts much pirated software is being used in government departments. (Toronto Globe & Mail 10 Sep 97 B12)

LOWER-PRICED PCs HIT THE "SWEET SPOT"

The new crop of bargain-basement PCs, priced at \$1,000 or lower is germinating a new market of buyers that could change the computer industry's economic model. Packard Bell says its two top-selling models both fall into this category, and that the lower-priced PCs now account for 30% of its retail sales, a figure that's representative of the industry as a whole. The rush to buy the new machines has boosted home-PC sales growth, and is predicted to push PC penetration of U.S. homes to 53% by 2001, according to estimates by Forrester Research. "That sweet spot of \$999 was something I couldn't resist," says one typical consumer. (Wall Street Journal 10 Sep 97)

SECURITY ISSUES ARE RISK-MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Consultant Ira Machefsky of Giga Information Group's Santa Clara office says that the issue of computer security is like the issue of automobile safety. "If I told you 100 years ago you'd ride around in a little steel box that could go 90 miles an hour, you'd have said that's crazy because it's dangerous. That's similar to the Internet. You accept the risks because the potential benefits carry the day. But it's all about risk management." (Information Week 8 Sep 97)

HIGH-LEVEL CRACKING IN CANADA

Computer Security Canada has opened an online library of computer security breaches that have occurred on the World Wide Web. The site contains examples of some of the most embarrassing Web security breaches that have occurred in government, the military, academia and industry.

<http://www.csci.ca/> (Toronto Globe & Mail 10 Sep 97)

ELECTRONIC MONOGRAPHS ARE "GREAT ADVERTISING"

As university publishers struggle to find the right business model for offering scholarly documents online, some early innovators are finding that making a monograph available electronically can boost sales of hard copies. The National Academy Press has already put 1,700 of its books online, and is finding that the electronic versions of some books have boosted sales of the hard copy monographs -- often by two to three times the previous level. It's "great advertising," says the Press's director. The MIT Press is experiencing similar results: "For each of our electronic books, we've approximately doubled our sales. The plain fact is that no one is going to sit there and read a whole book online. And it costs money and time to download it." Meanwhile, the Association of American Publishers has set up a Web site to showcase its new Digital Object Identifier System, which identifies copyrighted material and links the user to the copyright owners. <http://www.doi.org/overview.html> (Chronicle of Higher Education 12 Sep 97)

DEFENDING THE RIGHT TO HYPERLINK

World Wide Web founder Tim Berners-Lee says he's disturbed by the recent lawsuit between Microsoft and Ticketmaster regarding Microsoft's unauthorized hyperlink to Ticketmaster's Web site. "The question, 'May I have permission to link to your site?' has got me really upset," he says. The freedom to like from one site to another should be a given: "You and I have a right to discuss something," he says, regardless of whether that something wants to be discussed. "You don't have to ask someone's permission to talk about them." (Seattle Post-Intelligencer 10 Sep 97)

DIGITAL TO OFFER INTERNET SHOPPING SYSTEMS

Digital Equipment Corporation, in collaboration with Wells Fargo Bank, Microsoft, and VeriFone, will offer computers, software and services to retailers wanting to establish a store on the Internet. The system will make use of a Digital server running Microsoft's Storefront software, with Wells Fargo providing Internet credit card clearing services using software from VeriFone, a subsidiary of Hewlett-Packard. (Financial Times 10 Sep 97)

BELL CANADA, NETSCAPE TEAM UP ON ELECTRONIC COMMERCE

Bell Canada and Netscape Communications have formed a strategic partnership to provide Internet services to businesses, including secure electronic data interchange for financial transactions and sales information analysis. A senior VP at Bell Canada says his company hopes to become a major player in the Automotive Network Exchange, the automobile industry's initiative to automate transactions between car makers and suppliers on the Internet, scheduled to be fully operation next year. (Wall Street Journal 10 Sep 97)

AOL acquires CSi STR Focus Compuserve to be owned by AOL

CompuServe (Csi) to become part of AOL

>From Steve Case, CEO AOL..

September 8, 1997

Dear Members,

I'm pleased to be able to share some exciting news about a major business transaction which we believe will help us serve you better, and also bring the benefits of interactive services to a global audience faster.

This morning, we announced the acquisition of CompuServe's worldwide online services. Simultaneously, we announced that we are selling our network services division, ANS Communications, and entering into a long-term agreement with the acquirer, WorldCom, to provide you with expanded network capacity.

With these transactions, we now will be able to devote even more focus and resources to our core interactive services and content businesses. Importantly, it will mean a significant increase in AOLnet modem capacity - - which will mean fewer busy signals for you. We said we would make improving connectivity our top priority, and this deal is another example of us delivering on that promise. Moreover, the deal with WorldCom better positions us to bring you additional connectivity solutions -- permitting higher speed access -- in the future.

Once the deal closes, which will take a few months, we'll continue to operate AOL and CompuServe as separate services. That means, for example, that CompuServe customers will continue to access their system on the CompuServe network. There may be some synergies that make sense -- for example, we will look at the possibility of making some of CompuServe's business and professional content available to AOL members, and making some of AOL's unique technologies available to CompuServe customers -- but we'll be in a "walk before we run" mode to ensure maximum customer satisfaction.

The acquisition of CompuServe also helps expand our international reach, providing you with an ever larger, more diverse and global community with which to communicate. With the addition of CompuServe's over 850,000 customers to AOL Europe's nearly 700,000 members, AOL, in partnership with Bertelsmann, will become the leading pan-European Internet online service provider, with more than 1.5 million members less than two years after we launched.

The past year marked the transformation of Internet online services into a mass market medium. For millions around the world - whether they used it to communicate with friends and business colleagues, find information, shop, keep up with the news and latest sports scores, or just have some fun - our interactive medium has become a vital and fulfilling part of their daily lives. AOL has played a central role in making this happen. But we haven't been alone. CompuServe has been an industry pioneer for nearly two decades, and we're pleased to be bringing their expertise together with ours. Working together, we're confident we can meet your needs even more effectively than ever.

JUNK E-MAIL

Now let's switch gears a bit and discuss a problem that's facing our community. If you're like most members, you are concerned about the increase in junk e-mail. This was a minor annoyance a year ago, when unsolicited mail occasionally appeared in your inbox. But for a growing number of members, it has now become a source of considerable frustration.

In previous letters, I've told you about some of the steps we've taken the

try to combat this problem. Unfortunately, our efforts to date have had limited success, and the problem is worsening. So this Fall, we'll be stepping up our efforts, including deploying new technological solutions, and adopting a far more aggressive legal posture. I'll update you next month on some of the steps we're taking, but I did want to assure you that we are aware of the problem, we realize it is getting worse, and we are totally committed to addressing it.

BACK TO SCHOOL

September is here and that means it is "back to school" time for many of you. Whether you are a parent or are attending school yourself, AOL has a number of resources to get you back in the swing of things. We've placed them in a new Back to School area (Keyword: Back to School), which includes areas such as Getting Ready, Continuing Education, Homework Central, and Afterschool Activities. The Homework Central area includes one particularly helpful resource called The Paper Trail that can guide you through the daunting task of writing a research paper from start to finish. Back to School also offers kids or their parents a chance to win computers and AOL accounts for their schools, sponsored by AOL, with the help of ABC Kidzine, Plug In, and Moms Online. Just tell us -- in 250 words -- how you or your kids use AOL to learn and you could win! (Enter by September 18.)

AOL also has an extensive Reference channel that can help with everything from choosing a research paper topic to finding out what's wrong with your pet. Try one of the many tours -- for business, home, fun, younger and older students -- offered on the Reference channel to get you acquainted with some of the useful features like The Road to College, Barron's Book Notes, and Grolier's Encyclopedia. Or visit the Q&A area and ask a veterinarian, pediatrician, mechanic or a host of other experts about a range of subjects.

One of the most valuable tools on the Reference channel is the Searchable Periodicals area (Keyword: RefPeriodicals). You can search or read a particular publication and AOL gives you more than 100 to choose from. Here is just a sampling:

- ' • Major daily papers: Los Angeles Times, Philadelphia Inquirer, Washington Post, Boston Globe, Chicago Tribune and many more.
- ' • Sports magazines: Sports Illustrated, Bicycling Magazine, Field & Stream, Golf, Runners World, SKI, Sporting News, and others.
- ' • Entertainment and Fashion Magazines: Seventeen, Woman's Day, Entertainment Weekly, People, Rolling Stone and Playbill.
- ' • Other types of publications available: travel, computer, religious, major news weeklies, science, medical, international, and armed forces.

Finally, don't forget about our popular Homework Help area (Keyword: KO HH) in the Kids Only channel where students can visit a tutoring room or ask a teacher about math, science, English and reading, or social studies. There are teachers available to help you or your child 24 hours a day!

AOL POLICIES

Last month I promised you a better system of communicating to our members any changes in our policies which might affect your AOL experience. As part of this effort, we are currently reworking our policies in our Terms of Service to make them as clear as possible to all of our members. We will continue to keep you informed of our progress on this and related issues and we thank you for your patience.

BRANDON TARTIKOFF

In closing this month's letter, I'd like to pay tribute to a very special person. With the recent passing of Brandon Tartikoff, AOL lost a friend, and the entertainment industry lost a creative visionary. Brandon enriched America's television viewing experience for many years while serving as president of NBC Entertainment. Last year, he joined AOL Studios' Greenhouse Networks division to lend his expertise and enthusiasm to the development of a new entertainment service we'll be launching soon called Entertainment Asylum. Brandon's understanding of both traditional and new media, his vision, and, most of all, the humility and sense of humor he displayed while battling personal tragedies, touched us all. We mourn his passing, and our sympathy and prayers are with his wife and family. We will greatly miss him.

Warm Regards,

Steve Case

>From Frank Salizzoni Acting CEO CompuServe.

AOL Acquires CSi: Letter to Members from Frank Salizzoni

Dear CompuServe Customers:

CompuServe took a major step forward today, which will benefit you as customers by preserving what you like best about the CompuServe online experience, while providing the resources and passion that can move CompuServe forward. As you may have heard, the CompuServe online service is being acquired by America Online, Inc. Once the transaction closes, which we expect will occur within the next 6 months, CompuServe will operate as a separate business unit of AOL Inc., and AOL will continue to manage CompuServe as a separate brand. That means you will still have access to the existing services, using the existing software, and connecting through the existing network. Indeed, AOL has made it clear that they recognize and respect that you have chosen to be CompuServe customers for specific reasons, and they intend to do everything they can to continue to serve your needs.

AOL has had great success in reaching a mass consumer audience, and that will continue to be the focus of the AOL brand. CompuServe, on the other hand, has emerged as the leading brand for business and professional customers, and under AOL's ownership, CompuServe will continue to retain that focus. But this isn't just about preserving the status quo. AOL is committed to also launching a new version of CompuServe, building on the technology CompuServe already has under development. This new version of CompuServe will be available as an option to you--which means if you prefer using the existing service, as is, you can. But the new version is expected to have wide appeal, as it will be more Web-centric and easier to use.

AOL and CompuServe each played critical roles in shaping this dynamic new medium. Millions now look to interactive services to communicate with business colleagues and friends, find information, and stay informed. By working together, AOL and CompuServe can take the promise of this new medium to an even wider audience, not just in this country, but around the world.

Sincerely,

Frank Salizzoni
Chairman & Acting CEO, CompuServe

Painter 5 STR Review

Painter 5
for Macintosh & Windows 95
Suggested Retail Price \$449
Upgrade \$99
Fractal Design/MetaCreations
<http://www.metacreations.com>
Sales: 800-846-0111

Review by Donna Lines (dlines@uti.com)

Painter 5 is a computer illustrator's dream. No other paint/illustration program imitates natural media as well as Painter 5. If you can imagine it, this program can do it.

This program was designed for the professional graphic artist. Painter 5 has a steep learning curve. Also, the program has many numerous palettes with menus and sub-menus. This can create a lot of screen clutter and be somewhat intimidating to the casual user. A feature new with Painter 5 is the ability to tear off tools and create custom palettes so you can access the tools you use most frequently and regain screen space.

This program, although it works with a mouse, really benefits from a pressure-sensitive graphics tablet. Many brushes (depending on the variant selected) respond to pressure. Lighter pressure produces thinner, lighter strokes while heavier pressure creates thicker, darker strokes. You can compensate for the mouse by using the slider controls in the Brush Controls dialog box. This doesn't lend itself to the natural feel of simply pressing harder or lighter on the stylus.

Packaged in an attractive paint can, the program (version 5.0.1 and up) includes both the Macintosh and PC versions of the software, the User Guide, Tutorial guide, and Quick Reference Card. The guides are written for both the Macintosh and PC versions of the program. The manual alternates between the Mac and PC examples of screen shots. This can be confusing to the new user. Jon Bass, Product Manager, stated MetaCreations (formerly Fractal Design) went to the dual platform approach so if a customer changed from one platform to another, their investment in the product was protected.

Painter provides an abundance of natural media brushes including Pen, Felt Tip Pen, Pencil, Charcoal, Chalk, Airbrush, Crayons, Water Colors, Eraser, Liquid, etc. Each of the brushes has several variants that vary the look of the brush. For example, the Pen brush has ten variants including Fine Point, Calligraphy, and even Leaky Pen.

The Image Hose (similar to Corel Photo-Paint 7'sT Image Sprayer) paints images (called nozzles) in a random pattern on the canvas. Painter 5 includes several default nozzles (poppies, English ivy, stones, cumulous clouds, etc.). You can even create your own nozzles. There are many add-ons available from various software vendors and MetaCreations provides some free nozzles on the web site under "Goodies". I even found some free

nozzles on other web sites (not supported or controlled by MetaCreations).

MetaCreations has included new brushes with Painter 5. These include Gooley (for stretching, twisting, pinching, and bulging - try adding these effects to a photograph of someone you know!), Super F/X (to paint with fire or glow), Photo (easily re-touch photographs with scratch remover, add grain, sharpen, blur, etc.), Hue to re-color or tint your photographs, New Paint (to simulate fresh paint or an artist's palette knife), and the Super-Cloners (to paint on a transparent layer above the image without altering the image below).

Painter 5 also includes several plug-in floaters that allow to you to paint on a floater (layer) without altering the image beneath. My favorite is the Liquid Metal floater that enables you to paint with liquid metal. This allows you to create a melting metal effect. Other plug-in floaters include Burn, Tear, Glass Distortion and more.

New to Painter 5 is the ability to read and write Adobe Photoshop 3.0 and 4.0 files, preserving layers (as floaters) and paths (convert to shapes). Painter 5 and Photoshop treat layers, paths, and blending differently. Refer to the User Guide for more information.

Painter 5 supports several industry standard file formats including RIF, TIF, PSD, BMP, PCX, TGA, GIF, JPG, PCT, and AVI. You can save your files in the above mentioned formats, including EPS, but Painter cannot read EPS files. The program supports Adobe Illustrator for export.

Another great feature of Painter 5 is the ability to create Web pages. In just minutes, you can create a web page complete with links to other pages or web sites.

Painter 5 gives you the ability to edit and create videos and animations. Onion skinning allows you to preview the previous and future frames while you work on the current frame. Rotoscoping lets you apply effects and paint on existing movies. Standard movie formats are supported -- AVI, Microsoft Video for Windows (VFF) and Quick Time (Mac).

You can record scripts to increase your productivity. Scripts are especially useful when you want to add special effects to multiple frames in a movie. Just record your script, play the script, then sit back and watch Painter do all the work.

Unfortunately, sometimes a product ships with "bugs". Versions 5.0 through 5.0.2 have some coding problems and errors. All these issues have been addressed with the 5.0.3 update that is available for download on the MetaCreations Web site (it was not posted on the Fractal Design Web site at the time of this writing). Additionally, the Tutorial guide contains some errors. MetaCreations is addressing this as well, and expects to have a corrected Tutorial guide in Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format available from the web site in early September. The Tutorial guide has been corrected and is now shipping. For those customers who purchased the earlier version of the product and manuals, watch the MetaCreations web site for the update.

Service and Support:

Unlimited support is available through MetaCreations toll number Monday through Friday, or via the Web site at <http://www.fractal.com> or at <http://www.metacreations.com>. From within Painter, you can click on Help, Online Support to automatically launch your Web browser.

MetaCreations is currently offering the Wild Bundle add-on FREE with any Painter 5 purchase (online store price \$29/SRP \$89) when you order directly through MetaCreations On Line Store. The Wild Bundle includes three great collections in one excellent bundle: the Grains & Weaves and Patterns & Nature texture libraries, and the Trees & Leaves brush looks libraries. You get the natural look of canvas and felt, the richness of fabrics and wicker, and natural elements such as water, rock, and cracked earth.

There are many vendors supplying add-ons for Painter 5. MetaCreations will be adding new brushes and add-ons that you can download directly from the web site. What makes this program so exciting are the limitless possibilities. Try Painter 5 and set your imagination free.

System Requirements:

Windows:

486DX, Pentium, or Pentium Pro Compatible PC
Windows 95 or Windows NT 4.0
16 MB System RAM (32 for NT)
SVGA Video (24 bit recommended)
CD ROM drive

Macintosh

Power Macintosh
System 7.5 or higher
12 MB of application RAM (20+ recommended)
Color display (24 bit recommended)
CD ROM drive

UltraEdit / UltraEdit-32 - v4.40b STR Infofile

UltraEdit / UltraEdit-32

The editor for all your editing needs.

UltraEdit is an excellent replacement for NOTEPAD and a lot more, with support for unlimited file sizes, 100,000 word spelling checker, full HEX editing capabilities, configurable syntax highlighting for programmers, column editing. UltraEdit has all the features you will need. UltraEdit handles multiple files at once, even if they are multi-megabyte files. It is Disk based and only requires a small amount of memory, even for very large files. UltraEdit-32 is designed for Windows NT and Windows 95, and UltraEdit is designed for Windows 3.1. One fee allows use of both products.

Standard Features:

- Disk based text editing
- No limit on file size, minimum RAM used even for multi-megabyte files
- Multiple files open and displayed at the same time

- Column mode editing!!!, Insert columns/ delete/ cut/ add sequential numbers
- Drag and Drop Editing
- File sort (with remove duplicates, ignore case, ascending, descending)
- 100,000 word spell checker
- Syntax highlighting - configurable, pre configured for C/C++, VB, HTML and Java
- Automatic word wrap at specified column with hard return
- Insert file into an existing document at cursor position
- Drag and Drop support from the file manager
- Configurable toolbar
- Splitter windows
- Insert and overstrike modes for editing
- Multi-level undo and redo
- UltraEdit is Windows 3.x CUA compliant
- Find and Replace - Also allows selection of text between caret and find target when shift key is pressed, Replace all in select area
- Find in Files, Replace In Files
- Goto Line Number/Page Break
- Font Selection for display and printer. (Supports all fonts installed including TRUE-TYPE fonts)
- Print support with headers, footers, margins and page breaks.
- Automatic Line Indentation
- Tab Settings
- Word Wrap Support
- Hexadecimal Editor - Allows editing of any binary file - HEX Cut, copy and paste support
- HEX Insert and Delete of characters
- HEX Find, Replace and Replace All
- Bookmarks - Unlimited number of Bookmarks
- Multiple Windows of the same file
- Comprehensive macro support, including saving and loading
- Context Sensitive Help
- Automatic backup file generated with (.BAK) extension in the directory of
 - the original file
 - UltraEdit retains its screen position each time it is used
 - Line & column number display (line number display may be disabled)
 - Pop-up menus with right mouse button.
 - Text conversion to lower or upper case and capitalization.
 - Unix/Mac to DOS Conversion
 - DOS to Unix conversion
 - Auto detect UNIX/Mac files
 - Convert Word Wrap to CR/LF's allowing word wrap to be written to file with hard returns
 - Convert CR/LF's to Word Wrap (removes CR/LF's from file)
 - Template Support
 - More ...

Also: - UltraEdit accepts a command line input and so can be used to replace NOTEPAD or other editors that are called up from a file manager by clicking on a file.

----- Registration -----

You are limited to 45 Days of use for an unregistered version.

UltraEdit is a shareware program. If you find it useful and continue to use it you are obligated to register it with the author by sending \$30.00 (Ohio

Residents add \$1.65 Sales Tax) to:

Ian D. Mead
8209 Chestnut Hill Ct.
West Chester, OH 45069
USA

Free upgrades for at least 1 year.

Upgrade fee is \$15.00 (Ohio residents add \$0.83 Sales Tax) for previous registered users.

----- VISA/MASTERCARD/American Express Accepted -----

For VISA/MasterCard/American Express orders, include:

- 1) Name of card holder
- 2) Address of card holder
- 3) Name and address of user if different from card holder
- 4) Expiration date of card
- 5) Card #.

Credit card orders may be faxed or telephoned to (513) 779 8549, or sent to my E-Mail address (see below).

----- CompuServe Registration -----

UltraEdit may also be registered online on compuserve by typing GO SWREG and following instructions for registering using ID 2662 for UltraEdit and ID 4017 for UltraEdit-32.

This will entitle you to an authorization code, the latest registered version, and technical support.

For CompuServe registrations, a newer version is not sent out if the latest version is available on CompuServe.

----- E-Mail Address -----

Internet: idm@idmcomp.com (backup idm@ultraedit.com, idm@iglou.com)
CompuServe: 71613,2654
WWW http://www.idmcomp.com or http://www.ultraedit.com

----- Return Policy -----

No refunds are issued after an authorization code has been issued.
Exchanges are allowed if appropriate.

This program may be freely distributed provided it is unmodified, no charge is made for the software, and all of the following files are included:

- 1) READ.ME - This File
- 2) UltraEdt.EXE - Executable File
- 3) UltraEdt.HLP - UltraEdit help file

----- Latest Version -----

The latest version of UltraEdit/UltraEdit-32 may be found in several places:

The following www page:

<http://www.idmcomp.com> and <http://www.ultraedit.com>

In the WINUSER Forum on CompuServe, an official distribution and support online resource for future updates. Search for ULTRAEDIT.ZIP, and UEDIT32.ZIP.

The Windows Users Group Network (WUGNET), operators of the oldest and largest independent support resource forum (WINUSER) for Windows Users on CIS with nearly 1,000,000 active members is recognized in the press, user groups, developers, and Microsoft as the foremost resource for shareware publishers on CompuServe and the Internet.

On the Internet on several sites, including STReport's FTP Site (<ftp.streport.com>), CICA and other sites.

Windows is a registered Trademark of Microsoft Corporation.

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Advertising Program

The facts are in... STReport International Magazine reaches more users per week than any other weekly resource available today. Take full advantage of this spectacular reach. Explore the superb possibilities of advertising in STReport! Its very economical and smart business. In addition, STReport offers a strong window of opportunity to your company of reaching potential users on major online services and networks, the Internet, the WEB and more than 200,000 private BBS's worldwide. With a readership of better than 200,000 per week, this is truly an exceptional opportunity to maximize your company's recognition factor globally.

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Apple/Mac Section
Help Wanted

We ** NEED ** a staff person for this area. Anyone interested?? Contact the Editor via Email.

Kids Computing Corner
Frank Sereno, Editor
fsereno@streport.com

The Kids' Computing Corner
Computer news and software reviews
from a parent's point of view

In the News

CyberSound StudioT Makes Music Simple

Invision Interactive, Inc., introduces CyberSound Studio, an integrated and easy-to-install program that transforms any PowerPC Mac into an incredible musical instrument and composing tool. It provides the ease-of-use that will make beginners sound great on their very first tries while providing the necessary power for the accomplished musician.

CyberSound Studio is a complete desktop music solution. It includes a MIDI keyboard, a MIDI interface, cables and professional-level software in a \$99.95 bundle. The software features an intuitive interface that automatically corrects the playing of notes to the proper timing and key. Beginners can't make a mistake! The program features several one-finger chord options that make playing and recording very simple to master.

The program includes a wide variety of sampled instruments, songs, intros and rhythm tracks to speed the composing process. The Software Synthesizer negates the need for external hardware or additional instruments. It can do wavetable, analog modeling, FM and physical modeling synthesis that enables the software to play realistic sounds.

CyberSound Studio requires a Power Mac with System 7.1 or greater, 16MB of

RAM, 18MB of hard disk space, a CD-ROM drive and SoundManager 3.2.1 (included). This music package is now available on the West Coast. It will also soon be available for IBM-compatible computers. For more information, contact Invision Interactive by calling 800-468-5530, fax at 415-812-7386 or on the Web at <http://www.cybersound.com> .

Jason's Jive

Jason Sereno, STR Staff
jsereno@streport.com

Obsidian
Windows CD-ROM
Street Price: \$39.95
for all ages
(mild animated violence)

Segasoft
150 Shorewood Drive
Redwood City, CA 94065
1.888.segasoft
www.segasoft.com

Program Requirements

Windows 95 IBM PC or compatible with Pentium 90MHz processor
4X CD ROM drive, 16 MB of RAM, 16 Bit video, 2MB VRAM
strongly recommended, Soundblaster 16 (Soundblaster AWE32

strongly recommended)

Also available on Macintosh computers
Required is a Power Mac 7100 or higher with System 7.0,
16 MB of RAM, and a 4X CD-ROM

Obsidian, from Segasoft, is terrifically spellbinding and a must-buy for puzzle-loving gamers. It is superior to current Myst clones because of an intriguing storyline told on five CD-ROMS. Obsidian also contains five distinctive but equally beautiful realms. The graphics displayed are that to put to shame most other first-person graphic adventures. The Quicktime Video and beautiful melodies of Thomas Dolby are wonderful additions to this already spectacular game.

Obsidian is driven mostly by its in depth story and characters. The game takes place in an ecological disaster of a future and you play the game as

Lilah, an environmental scientist. Lilah, with her partner and love interest named Max, have created something called the "Ceres Project." The Ceres project is a weather control satellite that uses nanotechnology: Robots smaller than the human cell, to find and repair the worst parts of the earth's atmosphere. Everything seems to be working perfectly within the Ceres Project so Lilah and Max decide to run tests on the atmosphere from a campsite in the wilderness.

Suddenly, Max disappears. To search for him you are drawn inside of the, "Obsidian." The Obsidian is a giant black rock formation that propels into a you total of five dream realms. The rules of physics and almost all practicality do not apply in these five beautiful and challenging worlds. Each of the worlds contain many interesting and surprisingly different puzzles inside them. To solve the puzzles you must use your mind and intuition. The entire game is basically just a puzzle that has many twists and turns you must follow in your adventure filled storyline. In the end the fate of the world is in your hands as you must choose to live in a world that humans have destroyed or Ceres's "paradise" she plans to make.

Segasoft's new release takes you from point A to point B through Quicktime Movies. The transitions are smooth and display beautiful filmed and artificial landscapes. The game also uses combinations of the two making you wonder if you are looking at real landscapes or an artist's work while you are playing. This is proof that the graphics are almost uncanny in flawlessness and truly add dimension to the game.

Something else that no other Myst clones will have is a full soundtrack by the brilliant Thomas Dolby. His music is present through the entire game and when I played it clearly added dimension and atmosphere to Obsidian. His music is remarkably diverse throughout and is something to look forward to in the game. Since Obsidian runs about five hours in gameplay, you'd better believe that you will be thankful of the ever-changing music and sounds.

The bottom line is that Obsidian will impress you from the start up screen. The entire game is chalked full of story, puzzles, and breathtaking graphics and sounds. I have nothing but praise for the people at Rocket Science, the makers of this game and Segasoft, the publishers. By the time that Myst II comes to the market it will no doubt be held to the new standard set by Obsidian. Until then, I hope that all of you have happy gaming.

Jason

Things to look forward to in the coming weeks from Jason's Jive: I will take a look at two sport sims: Sierra's FPS baseball 98' and Legends football 98' from Accolade. Later this month I will also showcase two 3D-accelerated games from Psygnosis and an amazing yet surprisingly affordable 3D card from Intergraph.

File Format for STReport

All articles submitted to STReport for publication must be sent in the following format. Please use the format requested. Any files received that do not conform will not be used. The article must be in an importable word processor format for Word 6.0 and/or Word Perfect 7.. The margins are .05" left and 1.0" Monospaced fonts are not to be used. Please use proportional fonting only and at Twelve (12) points.

- '• No Indenting on any paragraphs!!
- '• No Indenting of any lines or "special gimmickery"
- '• No underlining!
- '• Columns shall be achieved through the use of tabs only. Or, columns in Word or Word Perfect format. Do NOT, under any circumstances, use the space bar.
- '• Most of all.. PLEASE! No ASCII "ART"!!
- '• There is no limits as to size, articles may be split into two if lengthy
- '• Actual Artwork should be in GIF, PCX, JPG, TIF, BMP, WMF file formats
- '• Artwork (pictures, graphs, charts, etc.) should be sent along with the article separately
- '• Please use a single font only in an article. TTF New Times Roman 12pt. is preferred. (VERY Strong Hint)

If there are any questions please use either E-Mail or call. On another note. the ASCII version of STReport is fast approaching the "end of the line" As the major Online Services move away from ASCII.. So shall STReport. All in the name of progress and improved readability. The amount of reader mail expressing a preference for our Adobe PDF enhanced issue is running approximately 15 to 1 over the ASCII edition. I might add however, the requests for our issues to be done in HTML far outnumber both PDF and ascii. HTML is now under consideration. We'll keep you posted. Besides, STReport will not be caught in the old, worn out "downward compatibility dodge" we must move forward.

However, if the ASCII readership remains as high, rest assured. ASCII will stay. Right now, since STReport is offered on a number of closed major corporate Intranets as "required" Monday Morning reading.. Our ascii readers have nothing to worry themselves about. It looks like it is here to stay.

Many grateful thanks in advance for your enthusiastic co-operation and input.

Ralph F. Mariano, Editor
rmariano@streport.com
STReport International Online Magazine

Classics & Gaming Section
Editor Dana P. Jacobson
dpj@streport.com

>From the Atari Editor's Desk

"Saying it like it is!"

Well, it's been awhile since I last spoke with you. What a couple of weeks it's been!! Mercifully, the move into our new house is over; the nightmares are re-occurring less frequently! Picture this, if you can... I rented a 24- ft truck, and FILLED it twice! Can you imagine the STUFF that you can pack into a truck that size...twice? Unbelievable. By the time we got halfway through loading the second trip, we were exhausted. And it was worse when we had to unload it; that's when the most damage occurred. Nicks and dings, a few broken items, and more. We're finally starting to get settled-in a little more but we still have a lot of work to do. It took me over a week before I got a chance to unpack my two Falcons and get myself and the BBS back online.

But I have to admit - it was all worth the aggravation. Owning your own house is wonderful. And getting out of the city makes it even more enjoyable! The smell of freshly-mowed grass, the trees, the birds, the quiet... So, what's been happening on the Atari front while I was "away"? Quite a bit. The timing was poor, as I wanted to comment about the pending close of the Atari Forums on CompuServe. What a shock and disappointment! I know the rationale behind this historical event, but I can't say that I fully understand it. But I can say it's been a real pleasure associating with the support staff there, from Ron Luks down through his list of SysOps such as Bob Retelle, Jim Ness, Bill Aycock, Mike Schoenbach, and all of the rest - what a class act all the way.

The Atari Forums will be sorely missed; and this is coming from someone who essentially is [now] in "competition" with them with my newly-assumed duties as Forum Manager on Delphi. While there are quite a few members of the CompuServe Atari Forum "jumping" over to Delphi, I can only hope that another Forum "takes over" the Atari support areas and adopts them into an existing Forum. From what I have heard, this possibility is close to happening. Whether or not the databases of downloads accompanies this possibility remains to be seen. My best guess is that the databases are too large and that a new one will be started from scratch. What a potential loss of Atari history! Fortunately, there are a quite a few people that I'm aware of that spent a great deal of time online to attempt to download as much of the libraries as possible. Let's hope that these files will be saved.

And to top all of that off, it appears that AOL now owns (or will own) CompuServe!! It's well-known that H & R Block has been trying to sell off CompuServe for quite some time. But to AOL?!? I have plenty more to say,

but it's getting really late and I need to finish up this issue. It's good to be "back" and we have plenty of news and info for you this week, and for the following weeks. Stay tuned.

Until next time...

Newsbytes NewsReel -- 12 Years Ago This Week

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, U.S.A., 1997 SEP 3 (Newsbytes) -- By Nick Gorski. Twelve years ago these Newsbytes stories were filed: Atari ST Selling Well; New Improved Mac; and Counterfeiting Conviction. These stories were taken from the extensive archives at the Newsbytes Website at <http://www.newsbytes.com>.

ATARI ST Selling Well

According to a good Newsbytes source, the Atari ST has sold better than the Macintosh in its first 6 weeks. The informed source close to Atari says 50,000 machines have been sold through approximately 1,000 retail outlets. In contrast, the Macintosh sold 70,000 units in 10 weeks. Comments from retailers range from, "We just got some more in" to "We just sold the last one." One dealer, who normally sells 10-15 computers per month, says he sold 50 STs in the last month. Atari will only say, "It's selling a lot better than we expected," and will not release exact sales figures.

New, Improved Mac Due

Either in January or February, Apple Computer will introduce the "Macintosh Plus." Sources say the new machine will contain the new 800k double-sided drive and the new 128k ROM set that will implement a "hierarchical file system," or tree structure, similar to the IBM PC. The serial connectors on the rear of the machine are said to be small, round, 8-pin connectors (not DIN connectors), which appear to be designed for add-ons by third-party developers. A rumor making the circuits is that the new Mac will be able to run PC-DOS and Unix, possibly through third-party add-ons. Nobody is going on the record concerning when a color Mac will make its appearance, but given the Amiga's impending debut and the ST's initial success, Apple must be thinking about it.

Counterfeiting Conviction

Teh Yi "Denny" Huang is the first person on the West Coast to be convicted of smuggling phony Apple IIs and illegal software into the US. Prosecutors say he imported 80 fake Apples from the Far East and sold one of them to an undercover agent. For his crimes, he faces up to 14 years in prison and a \$75,000 fine when sentenced in October. The only previous similar conviction happened in Philadelphia last year. Federal agents and Apple call the conviction a victory. Says Assistant US Attorney General Eric Fischer, "The fact is that a computer program embedded in ROM is the proper subject of copyright. Now nobody will be able to argue that they didn't understand copyright laws."

Hi!

There's some new updates and applications for Atari and compatible computers with Internet access:

The Homepage Penguin version 1.7 is now released as Shareware for the public, the particular version was in Atari Computing Magazine only this summer.

You will find a downloadable link at my new HP Penguin support page:

<http://www5.tripnet.se/~mille/penguin/>

The code for HP Penguin is now (not yet available v2.0) completely rewritten, to better be prepared for new functions, just as CAB was rewritten not long ago.

Manfred Ssykor (the man behind Atari Infopages, AIP) have made a ftp-client for CAB, called CABftp.

Peter Rottengatter from Germany have these days released new updates of the STinG packages. You will find a link to the apps from:

<http://www5.tripnet.se/~mille/english/sting.html>

The complete package have this URL-address:

<http://www.stud.uni-hannover.de/~perot/STinG/STING.LZH>

The John Rojewski's News/E-mail/Ftp-client NEWSie will be more multilingual in a near future, Swedish too. Add my english support page to your links:

<http://www5.tripnet.se/~mille/english/newsie.html>

Best Regards

Mille Babic

Mille Babic

eMail: mille@tripnet.se

<http://www5.tripnet.se/~mille>

2:203/221.4 (FidoNet)

Atari Falcon 40 MHz, 540MB+1GB HD, 12MB RAM

(Swedish) <http://hem1.passagen.se/atari/>

(English) <http://www.geocities.com/Vienna/Strasse/1235/>

Hi!

*** HomePage Penguin

HP Penguin is now completely rewritten and optimized for forthcoming functions. The web editor is now called HomePage Penguin Pro 2.0 and a lot of work has been made to cope with all supported protocols and bilingual versions. The editor now doesn't need OLGA to preview the results in a CAB window. The latest version is still 1.7 and so will it be until the end of September. It's nice to hear that Matthias worked so hard with his application and produced a high quality Atari web-editing application.

The new version will be released at The ATARI TOS Show '97 in Neuss/Dusseldorf okt 4-5.

*** channel Atari

My new project is aimed to:

- Atari users a news info line delivered through eMail
- PC users Users with MS Internet Explorer 4.0 or greater can add my

homepage as an Active channel.

Why do people with an IBM or compatible computer need to have an Atari channel button on their active desktops?

- We show that Atari is on The Net and that it's possible to connect any Atari with a TCP/IP-connection with PPP or SLIP. They're applications for all the services a Internet provider can deliver, E-mail, News, WWW, Telnet, FTP etc.

- In the choose channel database at Microsoft an Atari button will be visible and that's nice; and if someone chooses to subscribe an Atari icon will be present on his Win95 IE4 Active desktop.

- The ability to "push" info about Atari in general. They should notice that we're around.

I have worked quite hard with this IE4 features and it's now possible to add my homepage as an Active channel. You have to visit my homepage first and select the picture "channel Atari - Add as active channel". To be a member I had to implement a MS Explorer download button at my webpage, it's a criteria - there's no way around it.

The buttons Add Active channel and Add Active desktop doesn't work until the final version of IE4 will be released, a retrieve web page appear. This was a criteria to be a Level 1 member. They force you to use their logos if you want to be in the channel database.

I still need your help to make this newsletter to be something, send me news, texts or anything Atari Internet-related.

*** Hallvard Tangeraas Homepage

Hallvart has moved his excellent homepage to Geocities. It's located at <http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Bay/8745/>

His webpages contains several informative FAQ and other documents such as the TOS error list, virus list and a complete Atari FTP-list. Probably the largest Atari links page is located there divided into Soft/hardware dealers and manufactures, hardware projects, software, programming, software download archives, Internet and communication, operating systems, ST emulation, MinT, Magazines, users groups etc. A complete list to Atari UseNet News forums.

The complete list (links) to Atari FTP resources is found at: http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Bay/8745/atari_ftp.html

The very informative documents is downloadable at: http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Bay/8745/atari_files.html along with the most wanted utilities needed to the Atari platform, like STZip, Selectric, Maccel, 7up, Everest, Edith you name it.

*** NEWSie

The John Rojewski's UseNet News application is without competition the most updated Atari Internet application ever and there's several new usable functions implemented in every new update. The version numbering has just passed the 0.80 and the 0.82 is under development.

NEWSie is capable to cope with reading and sending News articles, full E-mail POP3/SMTP support with nicknames, mailboxes and an address book,

complete with a strong FTP support with connecting these software servers on the Net and to send/download files to them.

New in v0.82 is a popup menu for e-mail transfers between mailboxes, ability to attach files for e-mail and news via UUE and MIME encoding, non-default port-id for FTP, queue e-mail and articles, transfer rate logging for received data in cps and some support for Cut, paste and copy.

NEWSie is available in the English, French, Italian and Swedish languages.

*** STinG

As You all have noticed, STinG now supports a serial TCP/IP connection via PPP. There's lots of articles about this at the moment, especially in the comp.sys.atari.st newsgroup.

Try out "STinG - The Help page" at
<http://www.infomatch.com/~dooley/sting/sting.html>
by Johnny Dooley. Here's lots of example scripts to set up STinG.

Best Regards
Mille Babic
mille@tripnet.se
<http://www5.tripnet.se/~mille>

channel Atari: <http://hem1.passagen.se/atari/>

PH Player (sample player) - New release

Probe House (PH) Player release 4 is now ready for downloading from
<http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/6880/phsw.html>

New in this release:

- * New non-modal GUI
- * VA-protocol support
- * MS ADPCM support

PH Player is a DMA sample player for the STE, MSTE, Falcon & TT range.

Many features of PH Player are

- * Famous format supported (wav, au, voc, snd, avr, aiff, iff).
- * Auto sample speed adjustment.
- * Multi tasking aware.

But most important PH Player is FREEWARE

... no conscience of not paying up for shareware, not crippled & no nagging!

Regards
William

Creative Computers Signs Definitive Agreement
To Acquire ComputAbility

TORRANCE, CALIF. (Aug. 26) BUSINESS WIRE - Aug. 26, 1997 - Acquisition Will Increase Creative's Reach Into PC/Wintel Market

Creative Computers Inc. (Creative) (NASDAQ:MALL) Tuesday announced that it has signed a definitive agreement to acquire the assets of Milwaukee-based ComputAbility Inc., a privately held market reseller of PC/Wintel peripheral and software products, for \$8 million, \$5.5 million in cash and the remainder in shares of Creative common stock. The acquisition of ComputAbility, which recorded 1996 revenues in excess of \$50 million, is targeted to increase Creative's reach into the PC/Wintel market.

The acquisition is expected to close in the next few weeks. ComputAbility, which will operate as a wholly owned subsidiary of Creative, will retain its name and management team. "We have stated that our primary goal is to increase PC/Wintel sales and this acquisition represents a major step toward that goal," stated Frank Khulusi, Creative's president and chief executive officer. "The synergies of this acquisition are expected to be significant.

"We plan to expand our reach into the PC/Wintel market through ComputAbility's proprietary database, which is believed to have very little duplication with the names on Creative's proprietary database. We also see an opportunity to significantly increase ComputAbility's sales by broadening its product offerings to include hardware products already authorized for sale by Creative. "ComputAbility is profitable, with strong operating margins. Creative's balance sheet is expected to remain strong and the combined company is expected to have minimal debt on the date of the acquisition," added Khulusi. "Our plan is to support ComputAbility's growth in the PC/Wintel market, while enhancing shareholder value.

"We expect to work closely with ComputAbility's capable, experienced management team and warmly welcome ComputAbility's entire staff to the Creative family," stated Khulusi. "ComputAbility will continue to operate under its own name to capitalize on its strong identity and customer base of individuals and businesses it serves." Marcia Rose, ComputAbility's president, stated, "Creative is a well-respected leader in our industry and we are pleased to be affiliated with the company. By joining with Creative, we believe we can better serve our customers' needs by offering them a full range of hardware products in addition to our software offerings.

"We also expect to benefit from Creative's management expertise and substantial financial resources which will assist in increasing our market position." Founded in 1982 by Marcia Rose and Gary Rose, ComputAbility specialized in 8-bit computer hardware and software for Atari and Commodore. ComputAbility refocused as the market changed, moving into the PC peripheral, software and high-end consumer electronics marketplace, while continuing to grow its customer base through a strategic marketing and customer focused implementation.

Creative Computers is a leading direct marketer for users of personal computers. The company offers more than 45,000 products to its customers. The company creates demand for its products through its distinctive, full-color MacMall, PC Mall and DataCom Mall catalogs, outbound telemarketing, Internet marketing and its Web site, four retail showrooms and other promotional materials.

Disk Drive Maker JTS Corp. Declares American
to Supersede All Others

ANAHEIM, CALIF. (Sept. 11) BUSINESS WIRE - Sept. 11, 1997 - Concluding one of the disk drive industry's most closely watched supplier contests of

1997, American Custom Components (OTCBB:RBBS) Thursday announced it has reached a landmark agreement with leading-edge drive maker JTS Corp. (AMEX:JTS) to become the sole source supplier of card-edge connectors for the JTS CHAMPION desktop and NORDIC laptop hard disk drives.

American Custom Components (American) will supersede all current suppliers of card-edge connectors for the CHAMPION drive, recognized by many for its superior quality and performance in multimedia applications on desktop computers. Initial production of America's new proprietary connectors should approximate 200,000 units per month.

"We are very pleased to be a member of the supplier team for the CHAMPION drive," commented American chief executive Tony Walk.

"CHAMPION offers more than high-octane performance, it delivers the highest reliability available in desktop drives. And maximum reliability is our niche." (American also supplies the U.S. government with critical components for TOW missiles).

American will also be the sole source supplier of card-edge connectors for much-anticipated new version of the JTS NORDIC laptop drive due out in early 1998.

"The NORDIC is an OEM-oriented product," explained JTS marketing director T.J. Scimone.

"It brings blockbuster performance and capacity to the laptop arena and we expect to steadily increase our penetration among leading notebook manufacturers."

The customer list for NORDIC drives already includes industry giant Compaq Computers.

As with many American products, the connectors supplied to JTS will encompass state-of-the-art design elements patented by American's engineering staff.

STR Mailbag!

Hi Dana !!

This message is in response to those that were posted in STR #1335 regarding the transfer of text files from an ST to a PC.

There is an excellent software solution that has become available in Europe over the last six months or so. The program that people require is called PacifiST. PacifiST emulates an ST on a PC, and also is able to access the disks from the standard PC drive and run games, serious software and even demos !!

If any of the correspondents still have copies of First Word and other top ST wp progs, they can use this to load and access the files, and transfer them across to a Win95 directory via PacifiST's new extension, that has only just been released.

The URL for the program is as follows:-

<http://www.pacifist.fatal-design.com>

To use PacifiST legally you will need to grab a copy of your ST's TOS, using a specially supplied program with the entire package. PacifiST is shareware and is VERY useful. For those readers who subscribe to the British magazine, Atari Computing, it is intended that a review of PacifiST should appear in a near forthcoming issue.

I hope this helps.

Point your browsers there now !! :-)

Richard (Maggie Team)

--

Richard

Gaming Section

Activision Purchases Atari Rights!!
Final Fantasy VII!! PSX Sales!!
OddWorld"!! And much more!

>From the Editor's Controller - Playin' it like it is!

Wow, a lot has occurred since we last saw each other! Look at the PSX sales so far. Nintendo who?? Sony has really done a terrific job with the PlayStation. And JTS has finally done something with some of the rights to Atari-licensed games! It's about time!! Activision, not surprising, purchased the rights to Asteroids and BattleZone! Two great classics! Can't wait to see what they do with those two! And there's plenty more gaming news this week, too. It's obvious that the summer is over.

Until next time...

Industry News STR Game Console NewsFile - The Latest Gaming News!

Activision Acquires Rights to Legendary Video Games

SANTA MONICA, Calif., Sept. 8/PRNewswire/ -- Utilizing its expertise in enhancing classic brands, Activision, Inc. announced today that it has acquired the rights from Atari/JTS Corporation to develop titles based on the legendary video game properties Asteroids and Battlezone. The announcement was made today by Bobby Kotick, Chairman and CEO, Activision, Inc.

"Asteroids and Battlezone are two of the most recognized game franchises ever," states Kotick. "We have had great success using our proven product making capabilities with many of our own franchises such as Pitfall and Zork, and we believe our new designs for Asteroids and Battlezone will deliver the same level of excitement as the original games did when they launched the video industry."

The coin-operated version of Asteroids was introduced by Atari in 1979. In 1981, Atari released Asteroids for the Atari 2600 game system and by 1982, Asteroids was one of the fastest selling home video games in the United States. The game challenged players to warp into hyperspace and shoot a

path to the stars as they dodged plummeting asteroids and invading flying saucers.

In 1980, Atari introduced the arcade game Battlezone, the first 3-D video game ever made. The game created such a sensation that the U.S. army ordered modified versions of Battlezone to use in training. Featuring ultra-smooth vector graphics and a revolutionary 3-D engine, the game challenged players to deflect and destroy enemies within a large valley surrounded by mountains and volcanoes. Maneuvering from a first-person view inside of a tank, players thwarted attacks from oncoming supertanks, missiles and spaceships.

"We are pleased to be working again with another pioneering founder of the video game industry," stated John Skrch, Director of Licensing, Atari/JTS Corporation. "Activision's current leadership and ingenuity in the development field combined with our classic hits should make for a killer combination."

The agreement with Atari follows Activision's recent acquisition of premier game developer Raven Software Corporation and underscores the company's mandate to expand its publishing efforts through the acquisition of proven game franchises, external product acquisitions, strategic partnerships and corporate acquisitions. Complementing its substantial studio capabilities, Activision maintains strong relationships with such renowned third-party developers as id Software, Ritual Entertainment, Parsoft Interactive, Titanic Entertainment, Eutechnyx, Ltd. and Kalisto Technologies.

PlayStation's Final Fantasy VII is the Most Successful Per-sale

FOSTER CITY, CALIF. (Aug. 18) BUSINESS WIRE - Aug. 18, 1997 - With hundreds of thousands of PlayStation(TM) gamers already having placed their pre-sale orders for Final Fantasy(R) VII, Sony Computer Entertainment America is anticipating that Sept. 7 will mark the most successful videogame launch in the history of the PlayStation(TM) game console.

Since Aug. 1, consumers have been able to pre-purchase their copies of Final Fantasy VII -- the latest installment in the world's best-selling role playing game (RPG) series by Square Soft Inc. -- in retail outlets across North America through a massive pre-sell program. This program was instituted because of the long waiting lists that were developing six to nine months in advance of the launch of this PlayStation exclusive game. Also, the pre-sell program allows consumers to reserve their copy of Final Fantasy VII and be assured of receiving the game when it arrives in-store on Sept. 7, 1997.

"Based on Final Fantasy VII's incredible record -- breaking sales success in Japan, with 2.5 million copies being sold in the first three days, and the incredible feedback we've already been receiving from North American retailers, we want to make every attempt to ensure that consumers don't walk away empty-handed on Sept. 7," said Jack Tretton, vice president, sales, Sony Computer Entertainment America. "We want to give the customer every possible opportunity to purchase this ground-breaking title as soon as it hits the market."

"In addition to receiving a copy of Final Fantasy VII, consumers that participate in the pre-sell program will receive a limited edition T-shirt," said Tretton. "To date, we have distributed more than 260,000 T-shirts to retail accounts who are participating in this program."

"Consumers are starved for this game," said Pete Roithmayr,

director/senior buyer, video games, Electronics Boutique. "We have been pre-selling Final Fantasy VII for more than a month in stores all across the country. Measuring this product release with others to date, Final Fantasy VII will be the single largest-selling title in the history of Electronics Boutique."

In addition to the national pre-sell program, Sony Computer Entertainment America has launched a multi-million dollar marketing campaign for Final Fantasy VII which includes: three dedicated television advertising campaigns (cable, network, spot and syndication), massive print advertising, major national promotions, comprehensive public relations and dedicated in-store point-of-purchase displays.

To add to this blockbuster marketing support, Sony Computer Entertainment America is offering one million new North American PlayStation owners the opportunity to play and sample Final Fantasy VII. In an unprecedented move starting in September 1997, each PlayStation hardware package will contain an interactive demo disc featuring Final Fantasy VII and additional PlayStation-exclusive games from Square Soft.

With more than 50 hours of seamless gameplay featuring movie-like animation and incredible 3D graphics, Final Fantasy VII is an epic adventure that will rewrite the rules of videogames across the world. With hundreds of computer-generated images, aerial views and vivid battle scenes, the game contains mesmerizing visuals equating to a cinematic experience

In December 1996, Sony Computer Entertainment America agreed to a multi-title publishing deal with Square Co. Ltd., allowing the company full North American publishing and distribution rights to Square's 1997 PlayStation product line. Along with the rights to publish the revolutionary Final Fantasy(R) VII, Sony Computer Entertainment America has first rights of refusal on at least three additional PlayStation-exclusive releases, Bushido Blade(TM), Final Fantasy(R) Tactics and SaGa Frontier(TM).

PlayStation's Final Fantasy VII Marketing Blitz

FOSTER CITY, CALIF. (Aug. 27) BUSINESS WIRE - August 27, 1997 - As part of its marketing program for the most highly anticipated videogame release of the year -- Final Fantasy VII, only on PlayStation -- Sony Computer Entertainment America recently launched the first television commercial in a high profile three-month long ad campaign.

Featuring three dedicated 30-second spots - highlighting Final Fantasy VII's movie-like animation and incredible 3D graphics and gameplay -- television viewers and PlayStation fans across the country will receive their first sneak peek into the epic adventure experience of Final Fantasy VII. Network television placements include "Saturday Night Live," "Late Night with Conan O'Brien," "The Simpsons" and "Prime Time Sports." Other highlights include buys on cable stations MTV, ESPN, Comedy Central, USA Network, the Sci Fi Channel and E! Entertainment, as well as the syndicated programs "Hercules," "Baywatch," "World Championship Wrestling" and "American Gladiators."

Final Fantasy VII is the epic adventure that will rewrite the rules of videogaming across the world. With hundreds of computer-generated images, aerial views and vivid battle scenes, the game contains mesmerizing visuals equating to a cinematic experience.

"Final Fantasy VII represents a milestone in videogame television

advertising with the creation of three separate commercials supporting this phenomenal title," said Andrew House, vice president, marketing, Sony Computer Entertainment America. "Consumers can count on us to deliver the best with PlayStation, and they are definitely getting that with Final Fantasy VII."

In addition to the extensive television campaign, the Final Fantasy VII marketing effort also includes a major print campaign in general interest magazines such as Rolling Stone, Details and Spin, and gaming enthusiast publications such as Next Generation, as well as several DC and Marvel comic books. The print campaign, featuring four different ads, will appear in September, October and November issues.

Further supporting the marketing of Final Fantasy VII will be a major holiday promotion with Pepsi and significant consumer sampling through the distribution of one million interactive disks packed in with PlayStation hardware units.

The overall Final Fantasy VII campaign is just a portion of PlayStation brand's unprecedented \$100 million marketing campaign supporting the PlayStation brand and a multitude of other key titles. The entire marketing campaign also includes extensive print advertising, public relations, national promotions, retail promotion merchandising, direct mail, sampler discs and Internet support.

PlayStation's "Final Fantasy VII" Breaks Industry Record

FOSTER CITY, CALIF. (Sept. 9) BUSINESS WIRE - Sept. 9, 1997 - Sony Computer Entertainment America announced today that Final Fantasy(R) VII, available only on the PlayStation(TM) game console, has sold more than 330,000 units in its debut weekend, making it the best-selling videogame of 1997 with grosses of \$16.5 million, more than most Hollywood blockbuster movies on opening weekends.

"In just three short days, Final Fantasy VII outsold G.I. Jane, the highest grossing film of Labor Day weekend with box office sales of \$11.1 million, according to The Hollywood Reporter," said Andrew House, vice president, marketing, Sony Computer Entertainment America. "This weekend's sales will truly catapult Final Fantasy VII into videogame history -- consumers have selected Final Fantasy VII and PlayStation as their choice for entertainment."

Retailers and analysts alike predict the frenzy to continue to escalate as consumers spread the word about the phenomenal epic adventure which is played across three immersive CDs with more than 50 hours of seamless gameplay. Additionally, the game features a full length soundtrack that will stir players' emotions while simultaneously enhancing the entire videogame experience.

"Final Fantasy VII is one of the biggest releases for PlayStation, and with the incredible consumer demand for the game, it will drive new consumers to purchase the PlayStation game console," said analyst David Cole of DFC Intelligence. The game weaves together a complex and engrossing storyline with mesmerizing visuals, that are on par with a big screen experience. Cutting-edge technology maximizes the use of 3D graphics for gameplay, animation, vivid battle scenes, aerial views and hundreds of computer-generated images.

"Final Fantasy VII was created with the intent of delivering a heightened sense of entertainment that had never been seen before with a videogame,

and this could only be created on the CD-based PlayStation," said Hironobu Sakaguchi, co-founder of Square Co., Ltd., and chief producer of the Final Fantasy series. "Only PlayStation possesses the necessary technology for us to develop such a rich and textured storyline and graphics, so we can continue to challenge and surprise our millions of fans and attract new customers."

Final Fantasy VII also brings back many popular characters from previous games in the heralded Final Fantasy series, such as Cloud, Cid Highwind and Chocobo, while introducing new characters, specifically Aeris and Barret. The combination of these characters creates continuity for an epic adventure that has captured the attention of more than 13 million videogame fans since the inception of the series in 1987.

And even further demonstrating the worldwide success for Final Fantasy VII, fans in Japan embraced the game by snatching up an unprecedented 2.5 million copies during the first three days of release. "Based upon preliminary feedback from retailers about Final Fantasy VII, the incredible fervor surrounding the pre-buy program, and the record-breaking sales response in Japan, we definitively expected phenomenal sales," said Andrew House, vice president, marketing, Sony Computer Entertainment America. "Consumer response, however, surpassed all of our wildest expectations."

Final Fantasy VII will also feature a multi-million dollar advertising and marketing effort, which includes three dedicated 30-second television spots with network placements on such shows as "Saturday Night Live," "Late Night with Conan O'Brien," "The Simpsons" and "Prime Time Sports." Highlights of the print campaign include placements in general interest magazines such as Rolling Stone and Details and enthusiast gaming publications such as Next Generation. And rounding out the campaign will be a holiday promotion featuring consumer sampling through the distribution of 1 million interactive disks packed in PlayStation hardware units.

In December 1996, Sony Computer Entertainment America agreed to a multi-title publishing deal with Square Co. Ltd., allowing the company full North American publishing and distribution rights to Square's PlayStation product line. Along with rights to publish the revolutionary Final Fantasy VII, Sony Computer Entertainment America has first rights of refusal on three additional PlayStation exclusive releases, Bushido Blade(TM), Final Fantasy(R) Tactics and SaGa Frontier(TM).

PlayStation Worldwide Shipments Reach 20 Million

FOSTER CITY, CALIF. (Aug. 25) BUSINESS WIRE - Aug. 25, 1997 - Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. announced today that as a result of continued strong consumer demand, worldwide production and shipment of the PlayStation game console from the headquarters, Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. has exceeded 20 million units as of Aug. 20.

Following is a breakdown of the 20 million hardware units manufactured and shipped worldwide as of Aug. 20, by region:

- '• JAPAN Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. -- 8.5 million units
- '• NORTH AMERICA Sony Computer Entertainment America -- 6.4 million units
- '• EUROPE Sony Computer Entertainment Europe -- 5.1 million units

"As we head into the busiest season for the video game industry, I am delighted to provide detailed data to substantiate the worldwide leadership position that the PlayStation video game system maintains. I am also happy to release information on PlayStation's phenomenal growth in North America since the system's launch in September 1995, including sell-in and sell-through figures," said Kaz Hirai, chief operating officer, Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.

"As of July 31, PlayStation has sold through 4.3 million units in North America," Hirai continued. "PlayStation is the undisputed leader in the next generation console category and is widening its gap over the competition. With a broad line-up of long awaited titles such as Final Fantasy VII and NFL GameDay '98 coming this fall at affordable prices, PlayStation is set to dominate the category during 1997 and beyond."

In North America, the only gauge of video game sales has been the TRSTS Video Game Report produced by the NPD Group. The data reported is obtained from a representative sample taken from only 19 retailers, which by nature does not reflect total actual sales of PlayStation game consoles. July TRSTS results report cumulative PlayStation hardware sales of 2.6 million. It is estimated that this figure only represents about 60 percent of PlayStation's actual sales.

"At the current pace of growth running at about 2.5 times of last year, PlayStation is again at the heart of home entertainment in America. This holiday season will be the best ever for PlayStation," said Jack Tretton, vice president, sales, Sony Computer Entertainment America. "In response to overwhelming demand, Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. announced plans to further increase monthly production to 2 million units in the peak season, up from the current 1.5 million units per month."

Global demand for PlayStation software has also risen substantially with worldwide cumulative shipments exceeding 135 million units worldwide as of Aug. 20. The following is a breakdown by region:

- '• JAPAN Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. -- 70 million units
- '• NORTH AMERICA Sony Computer Entertainment America -- 35 million units
- '• EUROPE Sony Computer Entertainment Europe -- 30 million units

Sony Hikes PlayStation Output

Sony Corp. is increasing monthly production of its PlayStation game console to two million units from the current 1.5 million starting next month. In Tokyo, Sony officials told the Reuter News Service the increase is needed to cope with increased demand expected in the year-end shopping season. Accumulated worldwide PlayStation shipments reached 20 million units by Aug. 20, with:

- '• 8.5 million units in Japan.
- '• 6.4 million in North America.
- '• 5.1 million in Europe.

Sony also says 70 million PlayStation game titles had been shipped in Japan, 35 million in North America and 30 million in Europe.

Sony Launches Videogames in Mexico to Compete
with Nintendo & Sega

MEXICO CITY, Sep. 9 (Reforma/Infolatina) -- In October, Sony will launch its PlayStation in Mexico, a videogame console that competes with the products of Nintendo and Sega. The company will also begin promotion next month of its Digital Record Reader that can reproduce laser discs. Speaking at the inauguration of corporate offices and a national center of distribution, Kotchi Nakamura, president of Sony Electronics Mexico, affirmed that the company plans to introduce its line of multimedia computers VIAQ to the Mexican market beginning in 1998.

RuptureFarms Requests a Sit-Down With ABE

RUPTUREFARMS, ODDWORLD (Sept. 2) BUSINESS WIRE - Sept. 2, 1997 - GT Interactive Continues Countdown to 'Odd Friday,' September 19. A visibly agitated Molluck the Glukkon, CEO of RuptureFarms, said that he will no longer tolerate that "scrawny ingrate Abe" spreading absolute un-truths about his company and pledged an open-and-shut investigation if the on-the-lam worker returned to RuptureFarms to discuss matters.

"These are some serious, serious charges being leveled here against me and my company and I won't stand still for it. Someone get me a chair," said Molluck. "My duty is to the shareholders of this company and I will not have that compromised by a half-witted imbecile whose annoying habit of humming is driving everyone -- including my Sligs -- absolutely nuts."

Afterwards, Molluck was seen conferring in private with the head of his gun-toting Slig management team. Later, the clearly excited Slig was seen gathering his comrades and leaving the compound loaded for bear in the direction of The Ancient Temples for what is ostensibly being called "an off-site corporate meeting." Molluck has previously stated that he will begin production on a new meat product on "Odd Friday," Sept. 19, and that "no Meech-hugging recidivist" is likely to stop him.

GT Interactive's new Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee for Sony PlayStation and Windows 95 will debut nationwide on "Odd Friday," Sept. 19. An all-new game play experience for Sony PlayStation and Windows 95, Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee ushers in the new A.L.I.V.E. (Aware Life Forms In Virtual Environments) genre of gaming which features GameSpeak, real-time conversation between characters. The title recently garnered "GamePen's Best of E3 Show Award" for PlayStation by a consortium of industry media.

Accolade Ships Legends Football '98

SAN JOSE, CALIF. (Aug. 27) BUSINESS WIRE - Aug. 27, 1997 - Accolade's most anticipated football game has released -- Legends Football(R) '98! The game will arrive on store shelves this weekend, making it the first new football game of the '98 football season. "This release will launch what we believe will be the most successful football franchise in the market," said Jim Barnett, president and CEO of Accolade, Inc.

Legends Football '98 will include all 30 modern NFL teams and more than 1,500 players. In addition to modern-day play, the game delivers teams and football action from each of three key legendary eras in NFL history: 1932, 1950 and 1968, for a combined total of 76 teams. Each era has unique rules, regulations, uniforms, stadiums, and roster sizes and the game allows you to "time travel" to create fantasy football match-ups.

The game includes an entirely new 3D engine featuring unlimited camera angles and a lightning-fast frame rate. As made popular by other Accolade sports games, play construction and play book editors are included,

allowing gamers to create a custom play book. Drafting, trading and statistical tracking are available in single game, full season and career modes.

Legends Football '98 is currently available for personal computers running Windows 95. System requirements include: IBM or compatible computer, Windows 95, 486-66 Mhz (Pentium 90 and above recommended), 8MB RAM, and 2X CD-ROM. All major soundcards and gamepads, mouse, keyboard and joystick are supported. Multiplayer support for up to eight players is available via Microsoft's SideWinder Game Pad and the Gravis Grip.

Sega, Microsoft to Jointly Develop Game Machine

TOKYO, Sept. 7 (Kyodo) -- Sega Enterprises Ltd. plans to tie up with Microsoft Corp. of the United States to jointly develop a 128-bit home video game machine to market as early as in 1999, a business newspaper reported Sunday. The companies are now negotiating the project and are expected to officially sign a contract next month, the Nihon Keizai Shimbun said.

They will use Microsoft's operating system for personal computers (PCs) to develop game software for the new game machine, the newspaper said. According to the report, Sega is aiming at a rollback in the game machine market, while Microsoft is seeking to increase home PC demand through the expansion of game software. The companies will jointly develop the game machine on the basis of Microsoft's Windows CE operating system, it said.

They will use a 128-bit chip under development by Hitachi Ltd. for the game machine's central processing unit, which will have a capacity of more than 10 times the 32-bit Sega Saturn game machine, it said. The new product is planned to be priced under 30,000 yen, the daily said.

Tokyo Video Game Show Opens With 500 Titles on Display

TOKYO, Sept. 5 (Kyodo) -- A major exhibition of video game software opened Friday with nearly 500 titles on display at Makuhari Messe, an exhibition center in Chiba, near Tokyo. The Tokyo Game Show '97 Autumn opens for industry officials Friday and to the public Saturday and Sunday, organizers said. They expect a total of some 120,000 visitors for the three-day show.

The show, the third in a series since the fall of last year, features many software titles for raising virtual animals, following in the wake of the hugely popular Tamagotchi "virtual pet" game by Bandai Co., they said. By hardware, more than 200 titles are on display for Sony Corp.'s PlayStation, while Sega Enterprises Ltd.'s Sega Saturn has drawn more than 100 titles, they said.

About 20 titles are presented for Nintendo Co.'s NINTENDO 64, a more advanced game console that hit the market more recently than PlayStation and Sega Saturn. On Saturday and Sunday, the show opens at 10 a.m. and closes at 7 p.m. The admission fee is 1,000 yen, but entry is free for those of primary school age or younger.

PEOPLE... ARE TALKING

Compiled by Joe Mirando
jmirando@streport.com

Hidi ho, friends and neighbors. Well, it's been tough getting over loosing the Atari Computing Forum on CompuServe, but it's made easier by the fact that many of my online friends have, or are planning to, make the switch over to Delphi.

I know, I know, you're probably thinking that I'm mentioning that just because SOMEONE here is a Sysop on Delphi. That's not the case. I've been a member on Delphi for years and like it a lot. So do a lot of the CompuServe folks coming in to look around. The fact that Delphi allows access via the internet is, in the words of one individual, 'way cool'. It allows you to forget about finding a special access number for Delphi... you can simply get in through your internet service provider using a browser that supports 'cookies'.

For those of you who don't know what a cookie is, think of it simply as a 'symbol' of some sort that the remote computer gives to yours after checking to see if you really are a member. Internet servers work in a kind of silly way. Each time you access something like the next page of a document or another picture, the computer figures that you are just connecting up for the first time. Even if you've been browsing the exact same page for yours. Using a 'cookie', the remote computer doesn't have to re-check your account name and password each time you access something. It makes it convenient for the remote computer and, if your browser supports these cookies, there isn't much of an extra load on yours.

Unfortunately, there isn't a browser available for the ST that supports cookies. In CAB, the overlay file is what needs to support these token symbols, and I've heard that the author is considering what it would take to add support for them. It isn't a quick process to be sure, but I'm confident that it will be available before too much longer.

On another note, there is the possibility that CompuServe Atari users will have a new home before long. The Computer Club Forum, composed of ADAM, Timex/Sinclair, and other 'orphaned' computer users is investigating the possibility of housing an Atari section. I've spent a bit of time talking with some of these folks, and they are nice people. They know what it is like to be on 'the fringe' of technology, and accept it just as we have. It's funny, but Coleco dropped support for the ADAM so long ago, I had almost forgotten about it. But some of these folks just got together and celebrated their 9th annual ADAMcon, and they're in the process of planning next year's show already. Now THAT'S dedication. But dedication to what? To the machine, of course, otherwise they'd have moved on to other computers long ago. But also to their comrades who also use and ADAM. This is what struck me as so interesting. At first, I had thought of the ADAM as the little all-in-one computer with the daisy-wheel printer hard wired into it, running on a Z80 CPU. Surely, not comparable to an ST with a full meg

of memory, a Motorola 68000 chip, and the ability to use many 'off the shelf' peripherals like printers and modems. But there is a real similarity here. They help each other out whenever they can and dig and scratch to make their machine do something it was probably never meant to do, when a PC compatible user has nearly to pop a CDROM into the machine and hit the "Start Me Up" button. That sounds a lot like us, doesn't it? It's sure to be an interesting journey into the new forum, and I can't wait to see how it all turns out.

Well, we've got some info from the UseNet and from Delphi this week, so let's take a look.

From the UseNet

For those of us with access to the world wide web, Tony (pronounced !ynoT) posts:

"The STOSSER Web page has been updated, Its a FRAME FREE ZONE!..... Hey theres even a Graphical Puzzle game on line to play, but hurry before it dissapears to make way for the next one!..... Over 50 STOSSER Titles to download, descriptions and screen shots available too,News and screenshot of our next title as well as lots of other tittle tattle to read, over half a meg of pure text before gfx, Home of the Official STOS FAQ This week will see the (True) Counter hit TEN THOUSAND (10.000) and that's only from January 1st this year and does not include the last 2 years hits...

Please do sign the Guestbook!!!!"

On the subject of accessing the web without a browser, Robert Willis posts:

"STalker will handle text-based web browsing, and it'll run on 1/2 Meg, SS drive. You might have to have someone set up a single sided disk for you. It's commercial, from Gribnif (one of the very few companies still supporting ST's)."

Eric Hays tells Robert:

"This is only true if your Internet Service Provider is providing you with a telnet shell from which you can run a program such as Lynx on their machine. If that is the case, you could use any terminal emulator, including shareware, freeware, etc... A good one if you have a color monitor is Freeze Dried Term.

If, however, your ISP is not providing this service (and many do not), you will need to use something like STiK or STing to connect, and then run a program on top of this like CAB. I remember that STiK runs in less than 512K, and suspect that STing does as well, but I have no idea if you will have enough memory after this to run CAB with images turned off. But give it a try, all the software is freely distributed (CAB through v 1.5, and all version of STik and Sting to date)."

Gerhard Hoelscher asks:

"...Notator SL so far doesn't run on 68030 machines. Does anyone know why? Could it ba patched to run?"

John Gray tells Gerhard that it is...

"Something in the dangle search and timing routines built into the software. Apparently the PAK30 board has an optional 68000 and the whole business is switchable, so in theory one could rum Calamus SL

on the 68030 chip with every cache on and the machine screaming, then later switch back to 8/16 MHz and run Notator SL. But that is only theory."

My old friend Terry May asks for help with a problem he's having with STinG, the ST Internet Next Generation software:

"I'm getting a "DNS cache load failed" when STinG loads from the AUTO folder. Can someone tell me how to fix this?"

Eric Hays tells Terry:

"Yeah, read the directions! (grumble, grumble, grumble ;-) This is not an error message. Until you successfully connect with Sting it won't have a chance to create a DNS cache. Sting is just making note of this fact for you. Peter got complaints about this with the first release of Sting, even though it was noted in the documentation, so he made it even more clear in the documentation this time, and people are still missing that point. I can't figure it out."

I can, Eric. When most of us see an error message, we assume that there's been an error, not simply a note of what the program didn't expect to find. I'm not faulting Peter Rottengatter. I think he's done a fine job so far with STinG and I hope he continues to improve on an already nice setup.

Charles Silver adds:

"Yo Terry, my posts must not be coming through to your news server <grin> Auto folder Conflicts!!! NVDI, blah, blah, blah, then HS7, and STinG last. The only other obvious problem would be not to have the STX's in your STinG folder and have the STinG.inf file set wrong in your Auto folder. I know how you feel as there is a lot of ways to screw up with STinG as it was developed to work with a very WIDE range of Atari setups <smile> Most of us don't understand TCP/IP as well as Peter, and he doesn't understand the confusion that results. He seems to be getting a better handle on the results, however, do to all the posts to this NG :) Hang in there."

Ronald Hall adds his frustration to the discussion:

"...the logon using STing goes fine. I get to the part where it says PPP session from (number string) to (number string) beginning...at this point the last (number string) is shown in STings IP window, and it tells me that I'm connected and online, then quits. However, the modem LED flashes once briefly about every 5 seconds (its the odd characters after the word beginning) and then, about 2-3 mins. later, the ISP logs me off. What are they looking for from STing, that STing is not sending them? I use Oasis v1.35e with this ISP with no problems...."

Peter Rottengatter, the author himself, tells Ronald:

"[It] sounds as if you did not tell STinG to use PPP. Have you clicked the PPP button in the Dialer's Port Parameter and clicked Accept, or alternatively changed the PROTOCOL variable in the DIAL.SCR to 1 ? You're sure you use STinG V1.06?"

While Ronald hasn't answered yet, I thought it was important to include this info because there are probably more than a few folks who will be helped by Peter's advice.

While in the area, Terry May also posts:

" I'm getting an Iomega ZIP drive. What do I need to get it to

work on my Falcon, including formatter, driver, etc.?"

Kim Andersen tells Terry:

"First of all, you have to make sure it's SCSI, and not parallel. (But you probably know this. Just have to make sure). Then you need an HD driver which support removable media. HDdriver, SCSTOOL, and ICD should all work. I prefer HDdriver."

The author of HDDriver, Dr. Uwe Seimet, tells Terry:

"Any driver software should work. In case you also want to make use of the read/write protection features of your ZIP you might want to have a look at the HDDRIVER demo version at:

http://acp5.chemie.uni-kl.de/seimet/hddriver_english.html

ftp://acp5.chemie.uni-kl.de/pub/atari/hddriver70_demo.zip"

Uwe also has a cute 'signature' in his posts that I'd like to share with you. It says:

"I really hate this damned machine,
wish that they would sell it.
It never does that what I mean
but only what I tell it."

Hey, it's not Zen, but it gets the point across, doesn't it?

On the subject of whether to use HSModem or FaSTSerial, Charles Silver posts:

"... STinG doesn't work with Fast_Serial. If you load FS, the STinG.CPX only goes to 19.2k. If you try 150(? what- ever the 115.2K equivalent baud) FS chokes as invalid..."

That's because STinG wrongfully requires HS-Modem's cookie to offer higher speeds, even on M-STE/TT/Falcon."

Peter Rottengatter asks Charles:

"Why do you call it wrongfully ? STinG simply does not support the F_Serial way of doing higher baud rates. This is mainly because HSMODEM has become an accepted standard here, and even overseas people seem to use F_Serial only because it boasts a nice setup utility, contrary to HSMODEM. The latter is in the past now, with SERIAL.CPX which comes with STinG or can be fetched separately from my web page. I can understand that HSMODEM has become a de-facto standard, because it appears to provide much more flexibility, especially when it comes to adding and supporting non-standard ports. Note with HSMODEM you can use the serial port on a Macintosh (with MagiCMac) !! This has been demonstrated with STinG, which works well on the Mac ! I would probably add F_Serial support too, if I had more time, but there are so many other things to do ...

Charles also posts:

One way to somehow fool STinG might be to use the RSVX.PRG that comes with HSMINST, (a MiNT tool to correctly install the HS-Modem drivers under MiNT) to simply insert a cookie well enough to fool STinG.

Peter asks:

"Why fool STinG ? What for ? STinG uses the MAPTAB vectors to access the serial ports. I cannot understand why F_Serial fails with STinG, after all the vectors are documented features of the drivers, if F_Serial does not install them, it must be called improperly and incompletely done."

While I must say that I prefer F_Serial because it is much easier to install, it is true that HSModem is much more powerful and flexible. If I ever see an english version of the documentation for HSModem, I'll let everyone know so that they can benefit too.

From The Atari Advantage Forum on Delphi

Jim Collins of chro MAGIC software posts:

"I have... been spending time trying to get STiNG running. I have had some success getting the PPP portion of it to work, but it is S-L-O-W compared to STiK and seems to be "dropping characters" or "getting out of sync" with my provider as many of the images over 10K take FOREVER to load, then abort part way into the transfer and once the entire page is drawn, only part of some images are displayed. Anyone else have this problem? I tested it on a stock Falcon in both 256 and 16 color VGA video modes with the commercial CAB 2.0...

By the way, when I say some pages take FOREVER, I mean a 30K file can take 10 minutes to download at 33.6K - and then sometimes I only get PART of the file!

I seem to be getting a LOT of "error -315 software caused connection abort". The error 315 is what appears when I only get PART of a file. I have also had a couple of "unknown error -3" messages appear in the menu bar. However, the "unknown error -3" messages are VERY few and far between. The error 315 occurs several time per page with graphics."

Later, Jim posts:

"I found a solution to my STiNG/PPP problems... The problem was that the data was coming over the modem TOO FAST for STiNG to process - i.e., STiNG was dropping characters and "getting out of sync" with the sending modem. Dropping my serial port down to 19200 fixed the problem and now I get almost flawless reception of all files coming over the net. Once in a while I will see the old "pausing" problem (the "out of sync" problem) but it is not bad enough to cause aborts or errors - it just takes that particular file a little longer to download.

I hope the STiNG author optimizes the PPP portion so that it would work at 33.6K (or faster. However, it does work now, although not at top speed."

Ken P. asks:

"How can one make a floppy disk image for installation on a hard drive?"

George Iken of the Houston Atari Computer Enthusiasts Group tells Ken:

"I assume you are talking about a disk image (.st) to run on an ST emulator such as PacifiST (which runs on a PC).

Use the program STIMAGE (if you are on a PC). The command line for the program (it is run from the DOS prompt) is:

```
stimage read (name.st) auto
```

the (name.st) is the name of the disk you are trying to image. For instance, if you have the HACE August 97 disk, you would name the

image something like: HACE9708.ST

"auto" means the program will automatically determine the disk format (so you don't need to enter sectors or track parameters).

STIMAGE can even make an image of a High Density disk (for you Falcon and TT owners).

Alternatively, you can use MSA on the ST (Magic Shadow Archiver) to create an .msa image, and then run MSATOST to turn the .msa image into an .st image. All of that runs on the ST.

Once you have your image, then simply copy it (it is just a file) to your PC hard drive. I think it can be in any path on the hard drive (it doesn't have to be in the path of the drive that you have set up as the PacifiST C: (or D: through F:)). You load the image by pointing the A: or B: drive at the image on your hard drive. You can "change" floppies by temporarily exiting PacifiST into the "monitor" (press the "accent" character key) .. In the "monitor" press the F12 key to point to a different .st image, then type g (for go) to return to PacifiST."

During a conversation about the Atari Jaguar game Alien vs. Predator, Eric Elias posts:

"The mood of Alien Vs. Predator had something to do with the movie.

I noticed in all the Alien films, except for 3(I will refrain from commenting on 3), the high tension / suspense sequences had no music running in them.

That's what made AVP really scary. No music to distract you, and the game became fully immersive.

Not that music is bad, it's just that it's overused. Alien Tril, on Saturn and PSX have music running throughout all their levels and thus it's not as scary.

Hmm...the only sounds we heard in the game were the station sounds.. along with the other Alien stuff...

AVP was programmed well, and I still consider it among the top 5 of the best of Jaguar(Tempest being 1 of course.)"

I reply to Eric:

"That's right, there was no music in Alien Vs. Predator except for during the credits. The station/outpost/ship sounds set a nice, dark, almost oppressive mood. When an alien finally comes around the corner screeching at you, you can't help but jump!"

Barry Summer posts:

"Please excuse my ignorance here, but while I follow the stream of Forum messages, I haven't used my computer as much as in the past.....I also (at least for now) have the luxury of using the PC at work to search the internet.

I am currently using the Falcon with Cslip thru Delphi to access the internet and Cab. I have heard PPP mentioned with STing, and frankly, I don't understand the difference. I have not even d/l STing yet, due to the problems other more experienced users were having. What is the difference, or advantages of PPP???"

Greg Evans tells Barry:

"I think the advantage of PPP is probably for the ISP, not the user. I suspect with PPP your computer does more of the work but don't really know. A lot of ISPs only offer PPP these days so I'm basing it on that.

Hold onto STiK for now. I've heard some people have had success with STinG, but even those say it's slower than STiK. ORA is working hard to get their PPP program working and I would expect their setup will take away much of the guesswork we've had with STiK and STinG."

I add:

"The major benefit of PPP as compared to SLIP is that all Internet Service Providers make use of PPP, while more and more of them are dumping SLIP.

PPP also provides compression and error-checking, which SLIP does not. So, if you're using SLIP (or CSLIP) through Delphi and having no problems, hang with it until STinG is bullet-proof, or until Delphi decides to dump SLIP, or until one of the other PPP setups for our favorite flavor of computer has made a good name for itself."

Joe Villarreal posts this great little 'cheat note' with internet jargon:

"PPP stands for "Point to Point Protocol", a protocol for transmitting network packets over a dial up modem or other serial connection. PPP's big advantage over SLIP is that it's not restricted to the TCP/IP protocol suite, and can transmit other network protocols.

SLIP

Serial Line Internet Protocol, a protocol used to transmit TCP/IP over dial up and other serial connection.

CSLIP

a compressed SLIP

TCP/IP

Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol, a set of network protocols that assure the error-free delivery of network messages sent using IP (Internet Protocol)

SMTP

Simple Mail Transfer Protocol, a protocol used to forward Email messages to and between mail servers on the Internet.

POP3

Post Office Protocol version 3, a protocol used to connect to a "Pop Server" and download Email messages for a specific user. There is a variation of POP3 that lets users send as well as receive Email messages.

NNTP

Network News Transport Protocol, the protocol used to read, respond, and post Usenet news articles.

MSS

Maximum Segment Size

MTU

Maximum Transmission Unit, the largest physical grouping of bytes, including the information required to format it for transmission, that can be sent on a physical medium.

RWIN

Receive Window <probably the="" same="" as="" rcv_wnd="" in="" stik="">

TTL

Time To Live

PING

Packet InterNet Groper, a program that lets you figure out if you can reach another node on The Net, and how long each message takes to reach it. Ping sends a message to the node you want to reach, and that node echos the message back.

MIME

Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions, a method of transferring binary files via Email."

Well, with that bunch of info for us to digest, I'll leave you to sit back in a comfy chair and ponder the wonders of life, the internet, and everything.

See you next week, same time, same channel, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

EDITORIAL QUICKIES

"Our struggle today is not to have a female Einstein get appointed as an assistant professor.
It is for a woman schlemiel to get as quickly promoted as a male schlemiel."

--- Bella Abzug

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